

Clinton close to 270 electoral votes — poll

WASHINGTON (R) — A new state-by-state poll shows Democrat Bill Clinton has a strong lead in 18 states that would give him all but nine of the 270 electoral votes he needs to clinch the U.S. presidency. The poll, conducted by the ABC Television network, says the Democratic challenger is leading in additional states that are worth 47 more electoral votes. The poll also suggests that independent candidate Ross Perot, who jumped in the polls after the presidential debates, has peaked with about 15 per cent of likely voters supporting him. He is not leading in any single state. The poll shows President George Bush leading in three states — Nebraska, South Carolina and Utah — with a total of 18 electoral votes. He is not "clearly ahead" in any state. The survey found that 22 states with 212 electoral votes are still toss-ups between Mr. Bush and Mr. Clinton. That category includes four big states that went for Mr. Bush in 1988 — Texas, New Jersey, Georgia and Florida. In order to defeat Mr. Clinton, Mr. Bush would have to win the three states in which he is leading, capture all of the toss-up states and seize some of the states which presently favour Mr. Clinton. (Related story on page 8).

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gerian forces kill two militants

GIERS (R) — Two Muslim militants have been killed in a riot with security forces near town of Bida, the official news agency APS said Saturday. Agency quoted police as saying two were shot dead in their after a chase. Police said they used a type of ambushes bedded in blocks of wood laid across roads. Head of State Ali Hafi, in a speech marking the 10th of the judicial year, said the government was committed to "shining the forces of destruction and murder," a term used specifically for militants linked to the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). "We do not want our country to become an open zoo for international struggles that could destroy everything the national movement has achieved its glorious history," he said.

await assembly sets up PoW panel

WAIT (R) — Kuwait's new parliament decided on Saturday to set up a committee to press for release of missing Kuwaitis held to be held in Iraq since Gulf war, the official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) said. The committee would also assist families of the missing and those who died during Iraq's 1990-1991 occupation of Kuwait, it added. It has published an official list of 850 missing people. Iraq denied holding Kuwaiti prisoners of war (PoWs) and civilians.

Belgium to send gate to Somalia

USSELS (R) — Belgium said it would send a frigate to Somalia to give logistic and medical support to 550 UN troops waiting for United Nations mission to travel to the war-torn Horn of Africa. "When we get the go-ahead to send paratroopers to Somalia, the 'Zinnia' will accompany them for logistic support in the first three months," Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene told a news conference. Out of 75 extra soldiers will be deployed as part of the Zinnia mission. The Belgian "Blue Metals," who will guard famine relief, will also be backed by armed vehicles and helicopters. The U.N. is waiting for consent from local warlords to further troop deployment (page 2).

France presses India sign nuclear treaty

DRAS (R) — France is keen to help chronically power-short India to generate more electricity at nuclear stations, but Delhi is reluctant to sign a key nuclear treaty. French Minister Hubert Curien said Saturday. Mr. Curien, is minister of research and science, also suggested that the deal of a contract for French fuel for an Indian plant depended on Delhi signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). India took over supplying nuclear fuel to India's fast test breeder reactor at Tarapur, near Bombay, when the United States off supplies after India exploded a nuclear device in 1974. It has not exploded another and says it does not have war weapons. With the 10-year agreement nearing its end, it's repeated refusal to sign NPT, on the grounds that it innately against non-nuclear countries, appears to enter the renewal of the con-

100 march for Kurdish rights

NKFURT (AP) — Twelve-hundred people marched through downtown Frankfurt Sunday demanding that the German government protect the rights of Turkey's ethnic Kurds. Protesters in the full demonstration carried banners condemning the Ankara government for allegedly attacking Kurdish civilians. The protest, many, which has a large ethnic Kurdish immigrant population, came as Turkey's government pushed into northern Iraq to stop Kurdish rebels. The demonstrators demanded that Germany stop all weapons shipments to Turkey.

Rabin: Israel wants peace in return for part of Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel wanted peace with Syria in exchange for a partial withdrawal from the Golan Heights. He made the remarks late Friday after the Israeli delegation to Middle East peace talks presented Syria a new document mentioning for the first time "withdrawal" from the Golan, seized from Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

Mr. Rabin told Israeli Television the offer Thursday was a test of Syria's readiness for peace. But Syrian delegates at the Washington talks said the Israeli paper fell short of its demands for a full and unconditional withdrawal. Mr. Rabin said: "We will not leave this to hypothesis but we will test Syria with the illustration that we are ready to agree to a certain withdrawal on the Golan Heights, not from the Golan Heights, in exchange for a peace like this." "If Syria rejects this, I will at least feel I did what is expected of a prime minister to take advantage of the chance for peace... to say I did everything to reach peace."

Israel still rejects Syria's demand for a total retreat. But the Israeli team in Washington made clear it was willing to be flexible on the key issue of withdrawal from the strategic plateau if Syria satisfied its needs for full peace. Hawkish opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, a former

member of the Israeli delegation, attacked the Rabin stance. "If Syria wants real peace, it doesn't need the Golan Heights, and if it demands the Golan, as it does, then it isn't interested in real peace," he told army radio Saturday.

"The Arabs see peace as a means to take land from us which can allow them, if they wish, to start a new war," Mr. Rabin said. Damascus insists on receiving a prior Israeli commitment to full withdrawal, and says an Israeli-Syrian agreement must be part of a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement under which Israel returns all occupied Arab lands. Israel Television, interviewing Mr. Rabin to mark his first 100 days in office, noted that there was already some disappointment in his government. Mr. Rabin responded that he could not fulfill expectations in "three or five months," but that he still believed an agreement would be reached with one of the Arab delegations within a year. In addition to the peace talks, Mr. Rabin's government has had to deal with growing violence in the occupied territories and coalition infighting.

Mr. Rabin said he hoped to overcome the escalation of violence in the occupied territories and also noted that he "would aspire to decreasing the number of Palestinians that are working in Israel."

Mr. Rabin also hoped his two coalition partners — left-wing Meretz and the religious Shas — would find a way to resolve their differences.

Education Minister Shulamit Aloni of Meretz led to the present crisis by criticizing orthodox religious influence in schools and appearing to suggest removing a reference to God from a prayer for war dead.

Mr. Rabin said the two parties should put aside religious divisions and concentrate on what really mattered. "The government was founded to achieve national objectives and it is a shame to disrupt its ability to exist and operate well because of an argument over whether the world was created in six days," Mr. Rabin said. The Middle East peace talks which began in Madrid last year made good progress and a real opportunity exists to make peace in the region, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Friday. "Our government is determined not to lose this opportunity," he told reporters in Rome. "As they say in the English language, there is a window of

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King Hassan's visit to UAE delayed by 1 day

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — A visit by Morocco's King Hassan II to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this weekend has been postponed one day, the Emirates News Agency said.

King Hassan, who was due to arrive Saturday for the second stop of a five-country Middle East tour aimed at healing inter-Arab rifts and pushing forward Middle East peace efforts, would instead arrive Sunday, the agency said. It gave no details and Moroccan embassy officials were not available for comment. There was speculation in Rabat prior to King Hassan's departure that he might travel to Qatar to mediate in a dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia over a border clash in which three people were killed.

He held talks with Saudi Arabia's King Fahd in Dhahran on Thursday and visited his grandfather's grave in the Saudi Red Sea port of Yanbu Friday. The King is also scheduled to travel to Jordan, Syria and Egypt.

Saudi Arabia meanwhile renewed its demand that countries backing Iraq during the Gulf crisis admit they made a mistake, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

The official agency quoted the foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, as adding however that the kingdom backed continuous efforts to heal the split in the Arab World caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. "Any disturbance in Arab ranks reflects negatively on Arab solidarity and interests," Prince Saud said, adding that "confessing to the mistakes of the past is the best means of building a pan-Arab structure on a solid basis."

That call for an apology has been made not just by Saudi Arabia, but also by its Gulf Arab neighbours. The prince's remarks were made to journalists accompanying King Hassan.

Moroccan officials accompanying the monarch have said King

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Christians worry church property going to Israelis

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinian Christians, fearing the Greek Orthodox Church is selling or leasing property to Israel, demanded a greater role Friday in running the church's affairs.

About 200 representatives of more than 33,000 Arab followers of the church in the occupied territories held a rare meeting in Arab East Jerusalem to voice their concerns.

"There is fear, and actual incidents, in which the community's property is finding its way into Israeli hands," said Gabi Baranki, acting-president of Bir Zeit University in the occupied West Bank.

The Greek Orthodox Church, one of the oldest in the Holy Land, owns vast properties in some of the most valuable areas of Jerusalem and in major towns and cities across the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Even the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) building sits on land in West Jerusalem leased from the Greek Orthodox Church. Delegates said a 22-member elected executive committee is

seeking a say in administration of church property together with the predominantly Greek clergy.

Some said they wanted more Palestinians in the clergy.

"The Greek Orthodox community is facing injustice not only from the occupation but also from its spiritual leadership and it hopes to redefine its relations with its spiritual leadership," said delegate Ghassan Andoni.

The representatives also voiced concern over Israeli takeover of land and building in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

They cited the entry of Jewish settlers to the St. John's Hospice next to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem two years ago and the Israeli takeover of an olive grove on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. Both are church-owned.

At the time, the church said a tenant leased St. John's to settlers and it has since been trying to win the property back in court. Not all church followers are satisfied with the explanation.

Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat sent a message of solidarity to the meeting.

Arafat scraps plan to meet Hamas

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has cancelled plans to meet with fundamentalist rivals of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) next month, a senior official said Saturday.

The meeting was planned for Nov. 10 in Khartoum, Sudan. It had been arranged by hardline PLO factions like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

Hamas has grown into the main challenge to the PLO's influence in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hamas is vehemently opposed to the Middle East peace process begun last year and advocates escalating the intifada.

Recently, the PFLP and DFLP, which are the largest PLO factions after Mr. Arafat's own Fateh, recently joined Hamas in calling on the Palestinians to abandon the peace talks in Washington.

The senior official, who insisted on anonymity, refused to say why Mr. Arafat had decided not to meet with Hamas, a development which could have defused tensions between the two camps which had spawned fighting in the occupied territories earlier this year.

But he said Hamas, which is backed by Iran, and its supporters "are the Zulus of the Palestinian people," a reference to the South African tribes who oppose talks between the Pretoria government and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

PLO officials have said lack of progress in the Arab-Israeli peace talks would push more and more people among the 1.7 Palestinians in the occupied territories into the laps of Hamas.

Arab killed in Gaza

Masked assailants armed with axes and knives killed a Palestinian man Saturday in a hospital courtyard in the occupied Gaza Strip, the Israeli army and Palestinian sources said.

They said three masked men repeatedly stabbed Fawzi Issa, 36, a cleaning worker in Gaza's Shifa hospital suspected by

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Francois Mitterrand

Mitterrand due here next month

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — French President Francois Mitterrand is expected to visit Jordan at the end of November as a part of "a comprehensive effort to boost Middle East peace talks," a French official said Saturday.

The French president's scheduled visit to the Middle East region, which was preceded earlier this month by a trip of French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, is considered to be "one way of French endeavours to assist in the search of a Middle East settlement," said Pierre Glassman, press attache at the French embassy.

The two visits complement each other," he said. "While Mr. Dumas' visit aimed mainly at achieving an accord between Israel and Syria, the president's visit comes in the overall framework of the peace process."

Mr. Dumas' Oct. 6-7 visit to the Middle East included only Syria, Egypt and Israel. The visit aimed at discussing all points concerning the peace process. Mr. Dumas said during his visit. Mr. Mitterrand's visit, which is expected to last two days, will include only Jordan and Israel. This visit will also help in promoting Franco-Jordanian relations in all fields, observers say.

Turkey troops reach rebel Kurdish bases

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkish troops Saturday reached a crucial base used by Turkish Kurdish separatists in northern Iraq and inflicted heavy losses on the guerrillas, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

About 400 Turkish commandos reached at dawn the base 10 kilometres inside Iraq near Hakurk, located at the 2,800-metre level of a mountain, the dispatch said.

The commandos destroyed 10 undergrounds shelters used mainly as ammunition depots, according to Anatolia.

The Turkish soldiers later clashed with Kurdish rebels in Hakurk, leaving an undisclosed number of insurgents dead, Anatolia added.

The dispatch did not say if there were any casualties among the Turkish soldiers.

About 5,000 Turkish troops launched a raid into Iraq earlier this week, tightening the vise around Turkish Kurdish rebels under fire from Iraqi Kurds to the south.

Turkish jetfighters have been bombing the camps for the past two weeks.

The rebels of the illegal Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) have been fighting a guerrilla war for self-rule in southeastern Turkey since 1984, and are operating mainly from bases in northern Iraq.

They have escalated attacks over the past year, taking advantage of the absence of Iraqi control over northern Iraq after the Gulf war.

Of the more than 5,000 people killed in PKK-related violence, nearly half have died over the year — 800 this month alone.

The Iraqi Kurds started their military offensive against the PKK rebels earlier this month with Turkish air and artillery support. They acted under pressure from Turkey, which had accused them of sheltering the PKK.

Deputies, activists appeal to King to terminate Shbeilat-Qarrash case

By Sana Attiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Parliamentarians, political and human rights activists and trade union leaders Saturday appealed to His Majesty King Hussein to use his constitutional authority and quash the case against Lower House of Parliament members Laith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarrash.

A petition to the King and an accompanying statement released at a press conference supported the withdrawal last week by the defence lawyers of Mr. Shbeilat and Sheikh Qarrash, who, along with two shopkeepers, are being tried by the State Security Court on charges of plotting to topple the regime and install a caliphate-style government in Jordan.

The petition was signed by 11 members of the Lower House and one member of the Upper House — representing all shades of political thought in the legislative authority including the Muslim Brotherhood — officials of the Public Freedoms Committee of the House and the professional associations, leaders of political parties and various trade union movements.

"Out of our concern for the security and stability of Jordan and to protect its shining image, we implore you to do whatever you deem fit to end this case and bolster the citizens' confidence in the democratisation process," said the one-page memorandum. The petition sought to cast

Rebels attack Iraqi town — SCIRI

NICOSIA (R) — Iraqi Shiite rebels said Saturday they briefly seized a small town in southern Iraq and withdrew safely after killing its administrative, police and security chiefs. The Tehran-based Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said in a statement sent to Reuters its forces last week attacked Al Duwaybi, 30 kilometres east of Al Kut Governorate, and held it for three hours. It said 42 people were killed when its fighters stormed the police, security and ruling Baath Party headquarters, including the chiefs of the three government bodies. "The heroic operation sent terror and chaos among government forces and security organs," it said. The SCIRI report, which could not be independently confirmed, also said rebel forces seized weapons and ammunition and used government vehicles to return to their base. In another statement, SCIRI said the Iraqi government blocked the flow of the Euphrates River in the Fudhaili area, in the southwestern town of Nassiriya on Oct. 16 as part of its efforts to drain the marshlands. It said the water was released on Oct. 19, a few hours before a group of United Nations officials visited the area. It did not identify the officials but said "it was a trick which passed unnoticed by the U.N. delegation."

Top Vatican aide meets Hussein

By Sana Attiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

VATICAN CITY (Agencies) — The Vatican said Saturday that a top aide to Pope John Paul II has received a Palestinian leader at the Vatican, with the visit coming a few hours after Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met with the pontiff and invited him to occupied Jerusalem.

The Vatican press office declined to say what was discussed in the meeting Friday evening between Faisal Hussein and Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, who in effect serves as the Holy See's foreign minister.

A few hours earlier Archbishop Tauran met with Mr. Peres as part of the Israeli's visit to the Vatican, which included a 40-minute private meeting with the Pope as part of a recently launched process towards normalising relations between the Vatican and the Jewish state.

The Vatican's reception of Mr. Hussein was seen as balancing the enthusiasm generated by the extremely cordial Peres-Pope session. Mr. Peres told reporters the Pope accepted his invitation to occupied Jerusalem, although the Vatican did not report this in its account of the meeting, nor did it indicate any such visit was imminent while the two sides work

can, but the Catholic Church is keenly following the peace talks and would like to be officially involved in the process, a role precluded, however, precisely by its lack of diplomatic recognition of Israel.

The Vatican is concerned about the sizeable Palestinian Christian population.

The Palestinian problem, the unsettled borders of Israel and the status of Jerusalem with its holy sites for Christianity, Judaism and Islam, have figured in the Vatican's holding back on diplomatic ties.

Mr. Peres said Friday Israel and the Vatican had decided to exchange "personal representatives," which is usually a prelude to full diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.

The Holy See and Israel took the first step towards diplomatic recognition in July when they set up a high-level bilateral commission to study diplomatic links.

Mr. Peres, speaking at a news conference after his 45-minute meeting with the Pope, said the exchange of personal representatives could come after a planned Nov. 2 visit to Israel by a Vatican delegation.

(Continued on page 5)



Turkish soldiers run for cover as they come under brought them to positions in the Hakurk valley mortar fire after leaving an army helicopter that (AFP photo)

There are about 7,500-10,000 Turkish Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq and 3,000 more inside Turkey, according to the Turkish intelligence.

Iraqi Kurdish guerrillas said Friday they had checked their two-week-old advance against the PKK in northern Iraq.

"They are fleeing from their bases in (Iraqi) Kurdistan. We have achieved our objectives," Ahmad Shuker, spokesman for the (Iraqi) Kurdistan Front in the northern Iraqi town of Zakho, told Reuters late Friday.

He said Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga were holding frontline positions in the mountains close to the Turkish and Syrian borders and groups of rebel Turkish Kurds had been observed heading towards Syria.

"We have deliberately left their escape routes open. We didn't want to fight them, just to get them out of Iraq," said Mr. Shuker.

No casualty figures were available.

Iraqi Kurdish guerrillas attacked a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) separatist on Oct. 4 after they ignored an ultimatum from the Iraqi Kurdish parliament to withdraw from the border area they have been using as a springboard for strikes into Turkey.

The PKK's cross-border raids have angered Turkey which sent troops and warplanes across the frontier into Iraq soon after the Iraqi Kurds began their offensive.

In Ankara, Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said thousands of Turkish troops have crossed into northern Iraq to flush an estimated 8,000 Turkish Kurdish guerrillas from their mountain strongholds.

The Turkish troops are targeting rebel camps in Haftanin and Hakurk, some 10 kilometres from the Turkish border.

Turkish jetfighters have been bombing the camps for the past two weeks. But it was the first time such a large concentration of troops joined the fight.

Past bombing raids by Turkey on PKK bases have killed and wounded many Iraqi Kurds, further turning them against the Turkish Kurdish guerrillas.

Turkey's state television Friday carried footage from the Turkish operation apparently to show the army's determination to fight the PKK and to boost morale.

Cobra helicopters were shown firing rockets and jetfighters were seen bombing targets while Turkish troops advanced. Smoke rose from the mountains while soldiers cheered.

The PKK rebels responded at one point by launching an anti-aircraft rocket but the jets immediately headed towards a target and bombed it, the footage showed.

The terrain is covered with mountains at an average height of about 2,500 metres. Mines have also been slowing down the Turkish offensive, the report said. Iraqi papers see genocide, page 2

Zarqa factories closed for health reasons

AMMAN (Petra) — The public safety committee in Zarqa Governorate decided Saturday to close down four factories for violations of health regulations, according to Director of Zarqa Health Department Abdul Aziz Shreideh.

Dr. Shreideh said the factories, which manufacture sesame oil, ice cream and potato chips, ignored rules on hygiene and exposed citizens' health to hazards. The committee, he said, has also destroyed 1.5 tonnes of pickled olives because they were found unfit for human consumption.

The Irbid Governorate, the health department announced that it has closed down six stores and issued fines to 71 others along with warnings to 700 more because of violations of hygiene

regulations and public safety rules.

Department Director Maen Al Ghoni had warned shopkeepers of selling expired food stuff for the public and urged them to regularly check the expiry date on every product. He also called on them to destroy all expired items in their stores.

Dr. Ghoni said that his department has examined 500 water samples taken from various locations in the governorate last month. The department found 20 of these samples contaminated and unfit for human consumption, he said.

The department director also called on citizens to abide by health regulations and to be environmentally aware, saying an unclean environment helps in spreading diseases and epidemics.



THE KING HONOURS ADEL ABU KHAJIL: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday conferred Al Kawkab Medal of the Second Order on Jordanian businessman Adel Abu Khajil for his role in supporting charity and social societies in the Kingdom. King Hussein presented Mr. Abu Khajil with the medal in an audience at the Royal Court. His Majesty expressed to the audience his pride in the Jordanian people's solidarity and cohesion, especially those who have extended assistance to the needy.

Queen opens bio-conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein Saturday opened a five-day conference on biological sciences organised by the Jordanian Society for Biological Sciences and attended by delegates from 15 Arab states including Jordan.

Participating in the conference, held at the University of Jordan, are 250 delegates who will review 164 working papers dealing with microbiology, agriculture, botany, physiology, parasitology, microbiology and ecology.

The society has invited 150 guests from Jordan's various scientific societies to attend the sessions. Speakers at the opening session included Dr. Abdel Razak Taqi Addin, President of the conference's preparatory committee who noted that biology is vital to people's lives in terms of medicine and the environment.

— Meanwhile, Her Royal

Highness Princess Zein Bint Al Hussein, who is chairperson of the Jordan Society for the Protection of Animals, opened Saturday in Amman the annual conference of the Society for the Protection of Animals in North Africa (SPANNA).

Agriculture Minister Fayez Al Khasawneh delivered the opening address in which he said the ministry had signed a cooperation agreement with SPANNA in 1988 with the aim of providing veterinary treatment for farm animals.

He added that veterinary services covered by the agreement are offered by a mobile clinic.

Dr. Khasawneh said the ministry will assist the Jordanian society to expand its activities to help horses in farms and those in tourist sites such as Petra. He said his ministry was also ready to help the society build veterinary clinics in various parts of Jordan.

Tubeishat announces draft environmental law

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Municipal, Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat Saturday announced what he called a "very civilised" draft environment law that will treat existing pollution and introduce new protection measures.

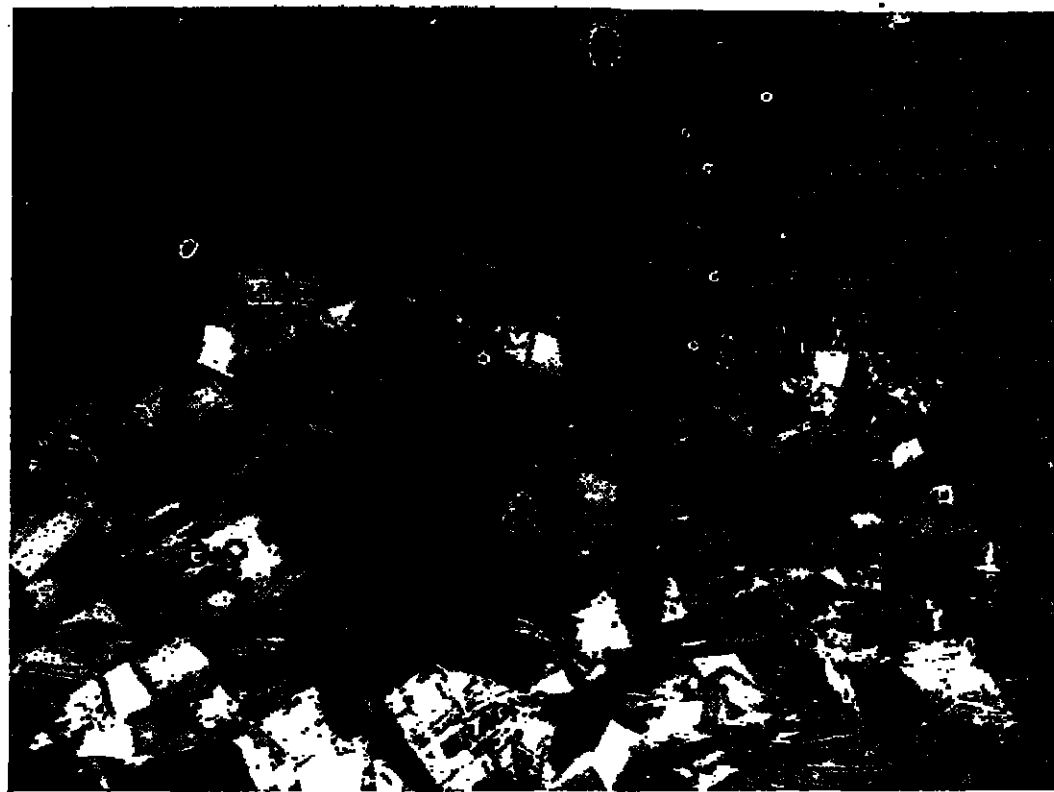
The draft legislation proposes the creation of an independent environment department which would consolidate the work of various governmental departments presently dealing with environmental issues under one umbrella, the minister told a press conference.

A special fund will also be established to finance environmental protection projects with complete authority to invest its allocations in commercially viable investments. Stressing at the law will not pose a hindrance to economic and industrial growth, Dr. Tubeishat said that the proposed legislation was drawn up by representatives of all sectors whose work might be affected by it.

"The law is the fruit of three years of work by 180 Jordanian scientists who represent the private and public sectors, industries, and environment protection societies in the Kingdom," Dr. Tubeishat said.

He added that three draft laws were prepared in the past but were rejected outright before presentation to the Cabinet. What distinguishes this one, he said, is the consensus which it drew from all involved parties.

Once the draft legislation is signed into law, the proposed general corporation for the environment will work out regulations which will be passed to other governmental organisations to use as the criteria for issuing licences for industries and businesses.



New environmental draft law aims to tackle pollution issues head on. (J.T. photo)

The corporation will have the legal authority to monitor compliance with its laws by industries and individuals and take action against those who violate them. Punitive action will range from fines to closure of industries that violate the law. "Protecting the environment is the responsibility of all," said the minister, but those who harm the environment must "pay to restore the environmental balance."

Considering the technical difficulties and time needed to prove environmental damage, he said, the draft law adopted "the assumed responsibility theory" which puts the burden of the proof on the defendant and not the plaintiff," according to Dr.

Tubeishat. Although the draft law says the corporation will identify threats to the environment and set standards for acceptable levels of pollution, it does not specify what these levels are. Environmental protection measures are currently included in the general health law, which entrusts enforcement to various government agencies.

Dr. Tubeishat said the level of pollution in Jordan is "good" compared to other countries but did not elaborate. He said some factories, water treatment plants and landfills are posing environmental hazards but the situation is not urgent and gradual solutions are being worked out.

By adopting a law on the en-

vironment, Dr. Tubeishat said, Jordan will fulfil two international treaties it signed at the Earth Summit in Brazil earlier this year. He stressed, however, that the treaties put no pressure on the Kingdom and the law was prepared in accordance with the country's needs.

Once Jordan adopts the draft law, the country will be entitled to financial assistance from international organisations concerned with the environment, according to Mr. Tubeishat. He said a copy of the law will be sent to the Geneva-based International Federation for the Protection of Nature and funds to help finance forthcoming environmental projects.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Seminar on refugees begins at Yarmouk University

IRBID (Petra) — A seminar on refugees and displaced persons in the world will start at Yarmouk University Sunday. The three-day seminar in which 35 officials from government departments and international organisations are involved aims to acquaint the participants with issues related to refugees and displaced persons, human rights, Islamic Sharia and the international law on Palestinian refugees. The seminar is organised by the university's refugees study programme in cooperation with the United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees which is financing the seminar.

ESCWA executive visits Yemen

AMMAN (J.T.) — Executive Secretary of the Amman-based Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia Tayseer Abdul Jaber, Friday started a six-day visit to Yemen, during which he will participate in a five day symposium on low cost housing in the Arab region, which will be held in Sanaa Oct. 24 to 28. The five-day symposium, organised by ESCWA in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank and the Yemeni Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, will discuss the housing crisis in the region. The rapid urbanisation, population growth, inter-regional migration and sweeping structural transformations are at the root cause of the problem. Recent developments in the region have created a need for the provision of shelter and public amenities. Taking part in the symposium will be some 200 policy makers, researchers, academics and consultants in the housing and human settlements field.

Traffic Department releases road accident statistics

AMMAN (Petra) — Thirty-three people were killed and 954 were injured as a result of 1,883 car accidents which took place in various parts of Jordan last month, according to the Traffic Department. The department said of the total number of those killed or injured, 57.4 per cent were under 20 years old, 20.1 per cent were aged between 21-30, 9.5 per cent were between 31-40 years and 7.6 per cent were between 41-50 years. According to the geographic distribution of accidents, the department said 1,070 of the total number of accidents took place in Amman, 251 in Irbid Governorate, 241 in Zarqa Governorate, 93 in Balqa Governorate, 49 in Al Badia region, 46 in Mafrqa Governorate, 39 in Karak, 32 in Madaba, 32 in Aqaba, 25 in Maan and five in Tafleeh.

North Shuneh prepares for municipal elections

NORTH SHUNEH (Petra) — Northern Jordan Valley District Governor Saleh Obaidat decided Saturday to establish 10 polling centres for the Northern Shuneh Municipal Elections which will take place on Nov. 2. Nineteen candidates are standing for seven seats on the municipal council.

Dermatologist conference planned for Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the third Conference of Arab Dermatologists Association, which will be held in Damascus from Nov. 2 to 5. A delegation comprising 20 Jordanian doctors, consultants and scholars will take part in the conference. Dr. Omesh Omesh, chairman of the conference's coordination committee said the conference provides a good opportunity for dermatologists to follow up on the latest information on diagnosis, treatment and prevention of venereal and skin diseases, and to become acquainted with scientific research.

Jordan film to be shown in Japan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's movie "Oriental Story" directed by Najad Ismail Anzour will participate in the "Middle Eastern Film Festival" to be held from October 23 to 31 in Tokyo, Japan. 12 films from 7 Middle East countries (Jordan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Qatar, Syria, and Turkey) will participate in the Festival. The Festival, which is organised by the Japan Foundation, a semi-governmental organisation to promote international cultural exchange and mutual understanding between Japan and the world, will provide the Japanese people with an intensive introduction of Middle Eastern films, thereby promoting the understanding of Middle Eastern culture and society.

Nurses commence training course

KARAK (Petra) — A training course for newly-appointed nurses started Saturday at the Karak Health Department. The 12-day course aims to acquaint the participants with issues related to preserving medicines, protection against diarrhoea, and vaccination of children. Eleven nurses appointed recently at various health centres in the governorates are taking part in the course.

Lack of accurate data hinders agricultural policy says minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's agricultural sector faces numerous problems from the lack of sufficient data and the inaccuracy of information about agriculture, according to Agriculture Minister Fayez Khasawneh.

Information about farming is either inaccurate or conflicting, the minister said in an opening address at a U.N.-organised symposium which opened in Amman Saturday.

The symposium organised by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, the German Agency for Technical Development and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will discuss agricultural management and data analysis.

Participants, who are either economists, statisticians or agri-



Fayez Khasawneh

cultural engineers will debate the use of computers in the analysis and storing of information related to agriculture.

Dr. Khasawneh said that Jordan is badly in need of revising and re-examining its agricultural

data collection and classification system to pave the ground for planning agricultural policies.

"We live in a world of scientific information and a revolution in the field of computers can provide the secret power which lies at the heart of sound economic planning," the minister added.

Failure to provide accurate information could be disastrous for economic planning and the lack of statistical data could cripple the work of decision-makers, said Sami Sumna, who liaises between the FAO and ESCWA.

Dr. Sumna, a former Ministry of Agriculture Secretary-General, told the meeting that agricultural surveys and the collection and storing of data was essential for the government which charts agricultural policies and advises farmers on methods of production.

Iraqi official claims Amman Baghdad road is safe

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman-Baghdad highway is safe and there is no danger whatsoever for travellers along the route, according to the Director General of the Iraq Jordan Land Transport Company Shaker Mahadin.

Dr. Mahadin denied last week's report by Agence France Presse (AFP) which said that drivers of Jordanian lorries were exposed to attacks murder and looting along the route inside Iraqi territory.

AFP quoted Qasem Saoub president of the Jordanian Lorries Owners Association as saying "that Jordanian truck drivers have been continually exposed to attacks. It said that the highway men would strip the trucks of their cargo of meat, children's milk, rice and cooking oil and that the association had repeatedly appealed for help from the Iraqi authorities who had recently taken action by apprehending



Trucking on the Amman-Baghdad highway

some of the attackers.

AFP quoted Mr. Saoub as saying that nine drivers were killed by the attackers but only six bodies had been retrieved so far. Mr. Saoub said the attacks started in the wake of the Gulf

war. Dr. Mahadin said that only a small number of isolated incidents occurred along the Aqaba Baghdad route inside Iraqi territory but for a year nothing of this kind has re-occurred.

Travel agents urged to join ARS

AMMAN (J.T.) — A general meeting for some 200 travel agents was organised in Amman Saturday to demonstrate the benefits of coordinating their services with Arab Reservation Services (ARS) which operates in connection with the Britain-based Galileo International Reservation System.

According to Majid Sabri, vice-president of Royal Jordanian (RJ), the introduction of the Galileo system would enable Jordanian travel agents to have direct access to 300 world airlines around the world.

RJ officials said that \$20 million would be saved annually by Arab agents who normally have to call their agents abroad to secure reservations for their passengers on international routes. Dr. Sabri told the Jordan Times that 11 Arab airlines have already adopted Arab Reserva-



Travel agents convene to hear the case for coordinating their services with an international booking system

tion Services and cannot only make direct reservations with airlines but can also make reservation in hotels, trains, theatres and other facilities for their customers in advance. RJ officials said that they expected more than half of the Jordanian travel agents to join this system by the end of this year.

Jordan, Sudan officials meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat conferred Saturday with Mohammad Basir, deputy speaker of Sudan's Parliament and his accompanying delegation to discuss parliamentary affairs and Jordanian-Sudanese relations.

Dr. Arabiyat said at the meeting that the Lower House of Parliament welcomes continued and more extensive exchanges between Jordan and Sudan by parliamentarians to discuss issues of common concern. He also suggested the idea of creating an Islamic Parliamentary Union that can address issues of concern to the Islamic World.

Dr. Arabiyat and his guest talked about the situation in Sudan about its agricultural production. Dr. Basir said that Sudan has been transformed into a food exporting country, offering help to Islamic nations from 20 million acres of arable land in Sudan which represents only 20 per cent of its agricultural potential.

Sudan's Minister of Trade and Supply Ibrahim Obeidallah is due in Amman Monday at the head of an official delegation to inaugurate the second Sudanese trade fair Wednesday.

The fair will display Sudan's agricultural crops such as cereals, legumes, spices, livestock products, cooking oil, leather, cotton, sugar and other items.

The ten day fair will be opened by Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour who will hold talks with the Sudanese minister on further bolstering Jordanian Sudanese trade and economic links.

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 667171

Local payment of traffic fines under negotiation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Municipality is contemplating the adoption of a system whereby violators of traffic laws would pay their fines within their own district rather than at the Traffic Department at Mahatta.

The announcement was made by Mayor Mohammad Bashir who said that arrangements are still being negotiated with the Public Security Department (PSD) which is responsible for the Traffic Department. Such arrangements would ensure quick collection of fines to the benefit of the Treasury and would also reduce the time taken-up in travelling to Mahatta.

The Mayor said that this step follows a joint study conducted by the municipality and the PSD as a result of the delay incurred in the payment of fines at the Traffic Department. According to Mr. Bashir, motorists who are fined for any traffic violation would be able to pay their fines locally but those who continue to delay payment after one and a half months would be referred to the concerned courts.

Under the new system, the Mayor added that traffic police would be directing motorists to the nearest station where they can settle their fines.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of oil and watercolour paintings entitled "Concepts in the Structure of Space" by Dr. George Sayegh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.)
- ★ Exhibition by Jordanian artist Khaled Khreis at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Ibrahim Al Shababi at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Photography exhibition of Petra at the Amman Marriott Hotel.

FILM

- ★ Feature film entitled "The Quite Man" at the American Centre — 5 p.m.

P-R-O-M-I-S-E



Under the patronage of their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Al-Hussein and princess Alia Al-Faisal. The «PROMISE» Welfare Society, will be holding a «Finland in Jordan» night introducing the top Finnish houses of fashion and their famous models to the Jordanian public. The number one Finnish singer «ARJA KORISEVA» will live the occasion; So join us to give our Finnish friends a warm reception by attending either:

The Dinner at 8:30 on Tuesday Oct. 27th at the «Nabatean» room at Amra Hotel. OR The afternoon tea at 4:30 on Wed. Oct. 28th at The «Nabatean» Room At Amra Hotel

For tickets and further information please contact the «PROMISE» center Tel: (817723) between 9 and 2 in the morning.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
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People at the core

IT WILL BE very difficult to claim that peace can be achieved in the Middle East without solving the problem of Palestinian refugees. The refugees, who are scattered in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and particularly Jordan, have come to this country in three major waves. The first was in 1948 after Israel declared independence and forced them away from their homes; the second wave took place in 1967 following the Arab-Israeli war; and the last in 1991 when about 300,000 Palestinians were expelled out of Kuwait through no fault of their own.

It is not that such an exodus necessarily creates demographic imbalances in the regions and countries where they take place. More significantly in our case the imbalances have added burdens to the country's infrastructure and limited resources.

The refugee problem, whether being discussed at the multilateral or bilateral levels of the peace talks, is one of Jordan's most pressing concerns. Not only is the refugees' stay among us temporary and governed by international resolutions, since their right of return to Palestine is valid and legal, their unresolved problem continues to pose political threats to the security and stability of the region and its countries. Unless these claims are settled once and for all, one way or the other, the situation will always be volatile and dangerous.

This easily explains why Jordan is placing much emphasis on the issue as a whole and on Western participation in finding a solution to it. Of particular importance to us is a role for Europe, which has in many ways been involved with the plight of refugees whether in Europe itself or with people coming from the South Mediterranean region and elsewhere.

The Palestinian refugee problem has, needless to say, been extensively dealt with in U.N. debates and resolutions since 1948. Resolution 194 guarantees the Palestinians who left their homes in 1948 the right of return, and Resolution 242 urges a comprehensive settlement of the whole Palestinian problem. But whichever way the problem is solved it should not be at the expense of Jordan. To do that is to plant the seeds for future disasters.

If the goal is to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, then the refugee problem should be elevated to the top of the agenda and priorities of the negotiations. Peace, after all, is about people and solving their problems.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT WAS not surprising to see Israel entering the seventh round of talks in Washington with the same position and intransigent stand, said Al Ra'i daily Saturday. The Israeli idea, it noted, does not derive into the substance of the Arab-Israeli conflict and therefore nothing has been achieved on any of the four tracks. It is clear, after the initial meetings, that Israel is determined to ignore all the principles and resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, said the daily. All that Israel is offering are matters considered superficial and not the core of the issue, and this does not help in any way in arriving at a just and durable peace. The document submitted to the Syrian side does not provide for Israeli pullout from the Golan as it does not define when, where and how the Israelis are withdrawing and from which areas. The Syrians, on the other hand, are justly demanding a full and prompt withdrawal, said the daily. The Israelis are only offering self-rule to the Palestinians, something which is far less than a process of full autonomy leading towards independence, the paper added. It said that the Israeli paper presented to the Palestinians is void of any Israeli decision to pull out from the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, let alone Jerusalem which is the bone of contention between the two sides. Similarly, the Israelis are ignoring the Jordanian team's demands and those of the Lebanese team and they reject the idea of abandoning the occupied parts of the Jordanian and Lebanese lands. Therefore, concluded the paper, it is clear that the seventh round of negotiations can only revolve in a vicious circle, with no end in sight, and no comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the foreseeable future.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily commented on the first air shipment of meat arriving in Baghdad from Sudan as a gift to the Iraqi people. The arrival of the Sudanese plane laden with meat was a translation of the true strong brotherly feelings of the Sudanese people towards their Iraqi brothers and sisters. The plane's arrival brought joy to all the Arab and Muslim participants in the general conference of popular forces who ended their meeting in Baghdad Thursday, said Fakhri Kassar. The writer said that the plane was a practical show of solidarity with the Iraqi people facing the sanctions. This practical step is better than thousands of slogans and speeches here and there in support of the Iraqi people, he added. This noble initiative is bound to leave a deep impression in the hearts of the Arab people and should serve as an impetus for other Arab countries to follow suit, said the writer. The Sudanese move, he said, not only caused joy to the Iraqis and the participants in the Baghdad conference, it made all the Arabs sympathising with their Iraqi brothers and sisters happy.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Interaction of economic and political reform

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

NATIONS approach reform in various ways. The Soviet Union, for instance, embarked on a radical political reform in the second half of the eighties, leaving economic reform to a later stage. China, on the other hand, embarked on an aggressive economic reform and adopted market-oriented policies, leaving political reform for a later stage. Neither reform worked as intended; the Soviet political reform created havoc in the economic field because the economic system was not compatible with the freedom of expression. The Chinese economic reform led to political expectations and uprising which the authorities needed to crack down violently.

Jordan chose to combine economic and political reforms as of 1989. When Jordan acknowledged the need to adjust and liberalise the economy, there was at the same time a call for free elections, political pluralism and freedom of expression. Economic and political reforms were sought almost simultaneously. So far the results are gratifying.

The Jordanian democracy is underrated in both Arab and international arenas. The Arab press is not highlighting the Jordanian democratisation process, simply because it is embarrassing to the repressive Arab regimes. The Western press, in turn, is not too enthusiastic because the West did not like the outcome, especially during the Gulf crisis when the Jordanian people opposed the foreign intervention to destroy Iraq and seize the

Arab oil reserves in the name of liberating Kuwait.

The Jordanian experimentation with the IMF and World Bank economic adjustment programme is also posing another embarrassment to five other Arab countries which adopted similar structural adjustment programmes but failed to perform properly and could not accomplish the set targets and honour their own commitments.

Two factors are behind the Jordanian success in spite of the difficult circumstances. First is the simultaneous and wholehearted application of political and economic reforms which reinforce each other. Second is the relative competence of the governing elite, who can make timely decisions, and the efficiency of the public administration, which gets things done on schedule.

When the prices of fuel were raised in April 1989, the Jordanian people took to the streets violently, due to lack of participation in decision-making and lack of information about the depth and acuteness of the economic crisis. When a consumption tax was imposed in November 1991 on many commodities, and fuel prices were raised in February 1992, the people tolerated the harsh measures willingly. They now know that they have a crisis to overcome, and a formidable economic mission to accomplish. They saw light at the end of the tunnel, took part in the extensive discussions about reform and finally they trusted the authorities.

We can hardly find a democracy anywhere in the world thriving

in an environment of a command economy with distortions and corruption, where the central government is dominating production, distribution and pricing. By the same token we cannot find a full fledged free market economy anywhere in the world except under pluralism and political democracy.

Economic and political aspects of any society are two sides of the same coin. You cannot change one in isolation of the other. Jordan realised this simple fact and acted accordingly.

In a recent symposium, organised in Egypt last week by the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation in various Arab countries to evaluate the structural adjustment programmes in Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Egypt and Jordan, the Jordanian economic and political experience stood out as an example to be followed.

At this symposium, Dr. Aljedine Helal Dossuki, the director of the Centre for Political Studies at the Cairo University, speaking on the political and social stability under adjustment programmes, stated openly: "In the Arab World, there are two types of leadership: the minority has vision, such as King Hussein of Jordan, and the rest, unfortunately, lack vision and can't see disasters until they are already upon their people."

It is the interaction of the economic and political reforms, coupled with a leadership endowed with vision, that enabled Jordan to convert even adversary factors into advantages.

Needed soon: new American leadership plus a new Europe

By Christoph Bertram
and
Fabio Luca Cavazza

MILAN — An independent commission under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and chaired by Winston Lord, has produced an impressive report on the future of U.S. foreign policy, "Changing Our Ways." For all those who may have doubted not the ability but the confidence will of the United States to solve its problems at home and abroad, the commission has provided a good deal of reassurance.

If the report nevertheless raises major questions among America's friends, this is not because of the clear priority it gives to getting America's domestic structure and economic house in order again. On the contrary, we welcome that change.

Many outside the United States have been worried by Washington's apparent insouciance toward the decay of American cities, the crisis of the school system, and the growth of an underclass without hope. The danger is that these ills could sap America's ability to play a responsible international role.

Nor are we worried that America might now be tempted to dismantle its means of international action, military and diplomatic. A shrinking of the U.S. arsenal is natural after the cold war, and it is without strategic risk for the United States and its partners in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. America will be militarily weaker in absolute but not in relative terms. And the United States is not ordering its soldiers and diplomats back behind the palisades of a Fortress America.

What does concern us is

whether America is really willing to engage its considerable means in the collective interest of the West. This is a concern that the Carnegie report, for all its sensible recommendations, does not dispel.

The report argues convincingly against American unilateralism. It correctly states the essence of what is left of President George Bush's new world order: "We will rely more and more on collective security to cope with new military challenges — or they will not be dealt with at all." It calls for U.S. leadership to mobilise such collective action.

Yet there is an underlying suggestion that somehow working within collective frameworks for

assuring international order will make fewer, not more, demands on national governments. The Carnegie report echoes here something which, until recently, was also a general European perception. The conflict in the Balkans has taught us otherwise.

What we have seen in Western foreign ministers in frantic consultation — in NATO, the Western European Union, the European Community, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe — without any one country accepting the task of leadership. As a result, all these organisations were lifeless, irrelevant to the conflict. They can come to life only when the

states that form their membership are willing to make use of them.

For the foreseeable future, the will will be generated only if someone takes the lead in pulling and keeping a coalition together. Witness the sad comparison between collective action in the Gulf conflict and collective abstention in the Balkans.

The important question is not which organisation but who will take the lead to make the organisation effective. In the West there seem to be few takers today.

We are among those who hoped that the European Community could grow into that role, sharing the burden, so to say, with the United States. But the

flabbiness of European will and vision in the unfolding Yugoslav tragedy has taught us and the world differently.

It is a lesson that the current post-Maastricht mood of Euro-resignation confirms. Perhaps Europe has for too long been accustomed to leaving leadership to the United States — when America declines to lead, Europeans don't know how to get their act together.

But what if America were no longer willing to provide that leadership?

Leadership within a collective security framework is more demanding than in the hierarchical structure that America became

accustomed to during the cold war. Can America, which for so long was able to call the shots, learn to convince rather than command? Can it, now that there is no common enemy to define a common Western interest, agree to adjust its own international priorities to accommodate those of its European and Asian partners?

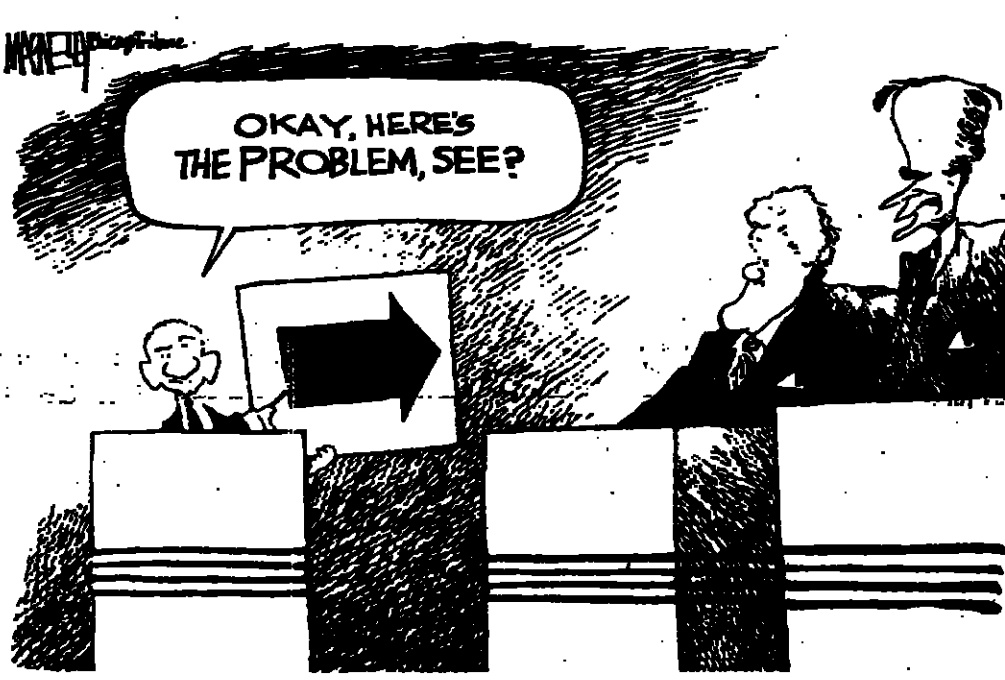
There is a real danger that, once again, Europe and America will be out of step. As the former gropes towards some international responsibility in a roundabout way, the latter might decide to opt out.

For the near future there is no alternative to America taking the lead. In fairness, though, it can be asked to shoulder that burden only if it can assume that before too long Europe will be able and willing to share it. America, in other words, can scarcely be expected to change its ways if Europe refuses to do likewise.

Our concern is that, instead of meeting the challenges to international order that lie ahead, America and Europe will point accusingly at each other saying that it is the other who has to change.

If Europe wants the America of the Carnegie report, it needs to think of how it could facilitate American leadership in a collective structure. And if Americans really do want to change their ways, they should start asking how their partners can help to bring that about. Mutual assistance in changing our ways is the first and most important step towards collective security.

C. Bertram is diplomatic correspondent of the German weekly Die Zeit. F.L. Cavazza is a senior editor at the Il Mulino publishing house in Bologna. The article is reprinted from The International Herald Tribune.



Lebanon 'an environmental disaster area'

LEBANON IS an "environmental disaster area" whose soil, water and forest resources are all under severe threat and whose government is doing little to remedy the situation, according to Ricardo Habr, an ecologist who heads the Lebanese Friends of Nature, an environmental pressure group.

The country faces three key long-term threats, Mr. Habr said in a recent address reviewed in the Beirut monthly Lebanon Report. Large areas of the Bekaa Valley, in the east, and the coastal plain were suffering from increasing soil salinisation because of the over-use of chemical fertilisers and improper irrigation. As a result, large parts of the country's two most fertile areas had been made barren.

The second major threat was the depletion of groundwater reserves in the Bekaa and elsewhere. In the early 1970s, the water table in the Bekaa was between 15 metres and 20 metres below the surface. Now, as the result of deforestation (which increases run-off) and over-pumping, it is between 80 metres and 100 metres below the surface. Moreover, in many areas groundwater reserves have been polluted by sewage.

The third major long-term environmental threat was deforestation, which led to soil erosion, increased rainwater run-off and lower air quality, said Mr. Habr. In 1969 eight per cent of Lebanon was forested. Now, the proportion is only two per cent.

Mr. Habr also highlighted a series of environmental problems which, although less severe, were shorter-term in the sense of being easier to resolve. They included air pollution from factories, vehicle exhausts, private electricity

generators and the burning of rubbish. He mentioned a large cement factory at Shekka, in the north, whence noxious fumes and dust travelled as far as Syria to the east and Cyprus to the west, depending on wind direction. Recent studies had revealed that almost the entire population of Shekka town suffered respiratory ailments, said Mr. Habr.

The dumping of rubbish, sewage and industrial wastes into the sea was another serious short-term problem, he said. Sea pollution, together with the widespread use of dynamite for fishing, had caused a sharp reduction in the number of fish in Lebanese waters. The country now had to import most of its fish from Turkey and Syria.

Lebanese environmental laws were adequate, Mr. Habr continued. The problem was that they were simply not being enforced, and he hinted that one reason for this might be that some public officials had financial interests in environmentally questionable projects.

To reverse the environmental degradation, firm guidelines were needed, declared Mr. Habr. After fifteen years of civil war, it was not only Lebanon's social and economic infrastructure which needed reconstruction. Even more important were the physical and natural foundations of that infrastructure which had been ravaged by war and by decades of unregulated development. Mr. Habr concluded by urging foreign donors of aid to Lebanon to make their assistance conditional on the Beirut authorities taking effective measures to safeguard the environment — Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU), Lebanon.

Spain marks a decade of Felipe with mixed feelings

By Robert Hart
Reuter

MADRID — A decade ago a young socialist was swept to power in Spain on a popular vision of a brave new nation after 40 years of dictatorship under General Francisco Franco.

Two general elections later Felipe Gonzalez is still in power, but despite undeniable achievements the vision has clouded and the feelings are mixed.

Mr. Gonzalez himself is greyer, plumper, more serious and more remote. The boyish grin of 1982 is seldom seen.

Three terms of office have made him one of Europe's longest-running political institutions. He has often said he is tired but still enthusiastic, but he has not yet said he will stand in elections due next year.

On October 28, 1982, the Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) led by Felipe Gonzalez Marquez, then 40, son of a Seville dairy farmer, won the backing of 10 million Spaniards with the promise of "a policy of change". That was 46 per cent of the electorate.

Victory brought 210 seats in the 350-seat congress.

The party which had begun Spain's transition from dictatorship to democracy, the Union of the Democratic Centre, crashed from 168 seats to 12 and the Conservative Popular Alliance, now the Popular Party (PP), became the main opposition group with 106 seats.



Felipe Gonzalez

initially suspicious he was anti-NATO and a friend of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

With the skilled aid of his late Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordóñez, he developed relations with Israel and the Arab states which led to the historic Middle East peace conference being held in Madrid in October 1991.

Mr. Gonzalez's personal contacts with President François Mitterrand led to French help in Spain's battle with the Basque guerrillas of ETA, finally bringing a series of successes in the past year.

Learning lessons from a failed military coup in 1981, which almost killed Spain's nascent democracy, the government cultivated the trust of the police force and gave the military a new role

in NATO and United Nations operations.

Several years of unparalleled economic boom — now at an abrupt end — brought a rush of foreign investment and wealth to many. The country's infrastructure and thinking was modernised.

A new generation now talks of interest rates and financial markets rather than of Franco and the civil war.

This year Spain celebrated the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's voyage of discovery to the Americas with a string of successful, high-profile events dominated by the Olympic games in Barcelona and the Expo 92 universal exposition in Seville.

Yet somehow, the celebration of a decade of "felipismo" has gone sour.

Economic problems have cast a deep shadow. A huge budget deficit and high inflation sapped investor confidence and the peseta was devalued by five per cent amid general EC monetary turmoil this autumn. Unemployment is rising.

In its urgent drive to align Spain with its economically stronger European partners the government has announced an unpopular austerity budget for 1993.

One of the first steps the newly-elected socialists took in 1982 was to devalue the peseta. "In 10 years the economy has gone from the agony to the agony, passing through ecstasy," wrote a financial columnist this week.

But the economic crisis is only part of the story. Popular dissatisfaction derives as much from the

way things have been done as from what has been done.

Spain's opposition politicians and press repeatedly accuse Mr. Gonzalez of being arrogant and aloof. They charge him with ignoring parliament, stifling debate and being interested more in international diplomacy than in Spain itself.

In the past three years a series of cases of alleged corruption within the government and the Socialist Party have left a bad taste and caused two ministers to resign.

Juan Tomas de Sales, editor of Cambio 16 news magazine, which normally supports the PP, wrote in an editorial marking Mr. Gonzalez's 10 years in power: "Our beloved Felipe...has become Gonzalez, not only in grey hair and years but also in spirit and temperament. It seems hard to stop the growing alienation of the average Spaniard from his leader. It may be inevitable but Spaniards will not forgive the burying of the dream of a generation."

A long-time Latin American resident commented: "If you had been away from Spain and come back after 10 years you would have to say things are much better. But if you have been here all along you know people just don't feel good any more."

Polls still show Felipe Gonzalez to be the most popular choice of leader, but support for his party has fallen to 38 per cent, with 31 per cent for the PP.

A Madrid musician summed up a frequently heard view: "I don't like it, but when the election comes I expect I'll just hold my nose and vote for Felipe again."

Israel wants peace for partial pullout

(Continued from page 1)

opportunity — I know the window is not very large and the opportunity is very great.

"I hope we shall keep the window open in accordance with the size of the opportunity."

Mr. Peres was speaking during a two-day visit to Italy during which he is meeting senior government officials and holding talks with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

"I would say there has been a great deal of progress both in the negotiations with Syria, with the Palestinians and in the multilateral negotiations as well," he said.

"I think there is a real opportunity to make peace in the Middle East," he added.

Druze poet to visit Syria

Druze poet Samih Al Kasem, believed to be the first Israeli invited to Syria, said Saturday he hoped his visit would promote tolerance and reconciliation between the two countries.

Mr. Kasem, from the village of Rama near Haifa, said he had received the open-ended invitation from Syrian Television Thursday and planned to go within a month.

Israel Radio, that first reported on the invitation, said it was the first time an Israeli citizen had been invited to Syria and that it signalled a warming between the two sides.

"If my visit to Syria will help make the atmosphere of tolerance and reconciliation better, I will appreciate it," Mr. Kasem told the Associated Press.

Mr. Rabin Thursday welcomed the opening of Syrian borders to an Israeli Arab citizen and linked the timing to the peace talks.

"If Mr. Rabin welcomed this visit it is a positive sign from the

Israeli government," said Mr. Kasem, who also sees himself as an ambassador for the Palestinians.

Syrian Television plans to interview Mr. Kasem on his poetry, politics, and on how Arabs live in Israel, the poet said.

Mr. Kasem served in the Israeli army and was a longtime member of the Israeli Communist Party.

Some 85,000 Druze live in Israel and Mr. Kasem says Druze opinions run the political spectrum but he sees himself as "a Palestinian Arab poet."

"I represent the conscience of the Arab nations from the Ocean to the Gulf. I see the Syrian invitation as an attempt by the Syrian government to be close to the Palestinian people," Mr. Kasem added.

His identification with the Palestinians is reflected in over 40 books of poetry and short stories in which Palestinian nationalism is a central theme.

The poet is well known throughout the Arab World and read widely among Israeli Arabs and Palestinians in the occupied territories. His works are also taught in Syrian schools.

While Mr. Kasem's poetry earned him Arab acclaim, it also led at times to trouble with Israeli authorities who claimed some works were incitement against the Jewish state, he said.

He added that at one time he was banned from travelling to the West Bank.

Asked his opinion of the ongoing Mideast peace talks, Mr. Kasem said he supports "the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories, including the Golan Heights."

Some 17,000 Druze live in the Golan Heights.

Renewed Gulf tensions shock Iranians

By Youssef Azmeh

Reuter

TEHRAN — Renewed tensions between Iran and its Arab neighbours across the Gulf have shocked many Iranians who worked hard to break out of 13 years of near isolation.

The tensions sparked by a dispute with the United Arab Emirates over the shared Gulf island of Abu Musa have mounted since Iranian officials there tightened entry rules, effectively barring foreigners employed by the UAE.

Iranian officials play down the issue as a minor squabble that should be easily sorted out and appear genuinely surprised at the angry UAE and Arab response that saw the Iranian action as a unilateral attempt to impose sovereignty over the island.

"They are shocked by the depth of Arab suspicion that was revealed by the incident," a Western diplomat said.

Many Iranians believe it is all part of a U.S. plot to undermine the Islamic republic's efforts to establish good neighbourly ties across the Gulf and to justify the continued U.S. military presence in the oil-rich region.

They dismiss all evidence that Washington was trying to defuse Gulf tensions.

Paranoia was so pronounced at the height of the dispute last month that Iranians repeatedly asked if they were being dragged into a new military conflict after the recent eight-year war with Iraq, residents said.

Iranian officials continue to insist there was nothing new when police in March tightened controls of foreigners living on Abu Musa. They say Iran had long exercised such control under rules not previously challenged by the UAE.

Diplomats said this was not the whole story.

Iran gained the right to station troops on Abu Musa under a 1971 agreement negotiated with Britain, then in charge of the foreign relations of the seven "trucial states" which became independent later that year and formed

the UAE.

A port was built on the Iranian-controlled part of the island — until then inhabited mainly by fishermen from the UAE sheikhdom of Sharjah.

UAE nationals and foreigners who staffed the few UAE federal facilities, such as its lone power station, clinic and a school each for boys and girls, started using the Iranian port when a ferry service from Sharjah was operated.

The new rule that caused uproar in the UAE was that foreigners were required to have Iranian permits to enter the island, which for the UAE meant Iran was claiming full jurisdiction over Abu Musa.

The previous practice was for the UAE simply to notify Iran of the names of people intending to enter the port and these were apparently never challenged.

Diplomats in Tehran were divided over the reasons for the Iranian action.

Some saw it as a muscle-flexing gesture reflecting frustration with the UAE and other Gulf Arabs.

Iran was angered by the Gulf Arabs' failure to respond to its pleas for a security role in the region, for urgently needed financial aid after its backing for Kuwait in the war with Iraq and for curbs on over-production by Gulf Arab oil states that was depressing the price of oil and Iran's revenues.

Others say it was simply a high-handed bureaucratic bungle. They said Iranian authorities, who were imposing stricter rules on foreign labour throughout Iran, extended the rules to Abu Musa without thinking of the consequences.

Under the 1971 agreement, neither side gave up its claim to sovereignty over the whole island and lower level Iranian officials presumably saw nothing wrong in imposing new rules.

But by raising the sovereignty issue, diplomats said Tehran had prompted the UAE to bring up a dispute over two other islands, the Greater and Lesser Tumbas, taken over by Iran in 1971.

King Hassan's UAE visit delayed

(Continued from page 1)

Hassan will call for an Arab summit to be held in Morocco to try to repair the Arab rift.

Aside from the split caused by the Gulf crisis, a number of Arab disputes have flared lately, including the territorial spat be-

tween Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The Moroccan king also is trying to help there, according to his delegation, noting that Saudi Arabia played a crucial role in mediating the Moroccan-Algerian border dispute in the 1980s.

Premier Rafik Hariri — Lebanon's Ross Perot?

By Peter Smerdon

Reuter

BEIRUT — Billionaire Rafik Al Hariri, named prime minister to save Lebanon from economic disaster, needs more than his fortune to deliver on promises to rebuild the country.

Whether the man some analysts see as Lebanon's Ross Perot, a wealthy, independent maverick promising a break with failed policies, can really beat the system is an enigma.

"He's a remarkable person but I hope he can pull a couple of rabbits out of his hat to buy some time to come up with real policies for reform and change early in his administration," a diplomat said.

"Another factor is he's very thin-skinned. He doesn't react at all well to criticism and Lebanese politics are tough. So how he will react when it starts has to be a major concern."

"On top of that we have the huge, unrealistic popular expectations his appointment has unleashed...for a miracle."

Two previous governments failed to halt Lebanon's economic decline after the end of 15 years of civil war in 1990.

The diplomat suggested that Saudi Arabia, where Mr. Hariri built his construction and banking empire and forged a close friendship with King Fahd, might produce a fast injection of aid to stop hopes turning sour.

The diplomat said Mr. Hariri's Saudi connections did not signal the kingdom wanted to weaken



Rafik Hariri

Syria's hold on Lebanon. Damascus last week approved his appointment as prime minister.

"Syria feels it's time to get the economy running again," an envoy said. "And in the long term that in turn means there is less room for any other power to challenge Damascus here."

Syria, which has an estimated 35,000 troops in two-thirds of Lebanon, pulls the levers of power with the help of a cooperation treaty signed after the civil war.

The diplomats said Mr. Hariri, 48, had several clear advantages as a newcomer to politics over the traditional Sunni Muslim leaders who preceded him.

Perhaps most important was his personal wealth, estimated at \$3 billion. Many Lebanese, long used to weak government and

firm believers in free enterprise, saw him as a model for the future.

The son of a South Lebanon farmer, he even loans President Elias Hrawi the apartment he has used as his temporary palace since 1989. The head of state's official palace is a war ruin.

But one of the prime tasks for Mr. Hariri, noted for his rigid demands for personal loyalty from his own employees, is to stamp out corruption among officials and make Lebanon work.

That will inevitably put him at odds with much of the bloated civil service and Lebanon's traditional ruling class.

"We're early in the honeymoon stage but the usual suspects are lining up to be taken on," said a diplomat. "They are hoping Hariri will either put them on the payroll or buy them off."

One diplomat even suggested Mr. Hariri might have smoothed his way if he had refused the post on Thursday. He could have let someone else grapple with the political mess and then step in when the economy claimed another victim.

The diplomats said Mr. Hariri realised he had to take his time in forming a cabinet to balance his new technocrats with the political muscle of Lebanon's old guard.

"There are a number of (former) warlords who have to be in the cabinet. That is a challenge. But without them he can make all the plans he likes and they won't work," a diplomat said.

Another potential stumbling bloc was to exclude from the

cabinet Christian opponents of Syria's role in Lebanon who refuse to recognise the first new parliament in 20 years.

"This will put the (Christian-Muslim) rift into concrete terms," a diplomat said. "I see it as a big mistake in the long term and not conducive to a return of business confidence."

The diplomats said, however, they expected Syria to agree to withdraw some of its troops from the Beirut area to eastern Lebanon in the next few months to bolster the new government.

They also said Mr. Hrawi's choice of Mr. Hariri and the election on Tuesday of Shiite Muslim leader Nabih Berri as the new parliament speaker ensured that the most powerful political posts were held by three men who could work together.

Squabbles between the president and the previous prime minister and speaker were a feature of the two earlier Syrian-backed governments, with all three making regular visits to power broker Damascus to settle differences.

The diplomats doubted Mr. Hariri could meet U.S. demands for Beirut to curb pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) guerrillas in hopes of winning an Israeli pullout from South Lebanon.

They said prospects for an Israeli withdrawal from the south depended on agreement first being reached on the Golan Heights at Middle East peace talks between Syria and the Jewish state.

Deputies, activists appeal to King

(Continued from page 1)

Shbeilat led to the withdrawal of the defence team led by Ibrahim Bakr. The court appointed state lawyers for the two deputies on Wednesday and scheduled a hearing for today.

Appearing at Saturday's press conference, several deputies who are also professional lawyers, said the King better use his absolute constitutional power to terminate any case in the Kingdom and appeal to His Majesty to intervene on behalf of justice.

"His Majesty has the constitutional authority to issue an amnesty and to cancel the charges, regardless of the innocence or guilt of the defendants," said Salim Zoubi, a lawyer and member of the House.

Mr. Zoubi also noted that the King had the power to pardon anyone convicted by a court of law regardless of the nature of the crime.

The charge-sheet filed in court says Mr. Shbeilat and Sheikh Qarrah along with shopkeepers Ahmad Ayoubi and Abdul Hamid Idkadek belonged to an illegal organisation called Shabab Al Nafar Al Islami, whose objective was to topple the monarchy and rewrite the Jordanian constitution.

All the four defendants face additional charges of possession of explosives and weapons. Charges against Mr. Shbeilat include attempts to undermine Iraqi-Jordanian relations and slander of His Majesty the King and fellow members of Parliament.

The appeal to the King said the introduction as evidence of cassette tapes containing taped telephone conversations was unprecedented in Jordan's history and unacceptable since wiretapping "violated the constitutional rights" of citizens.

Addressing the press conference, held at the Professional Associations Complex, were also other deputies, most prominent among whom were Muslim Brotherhood Member of Parliament Youssef Al Athem, Brother-

hood Parliamentary spokesman Ibrahim Khreifat, and Lower House Deputy Speaker Abdul Karim Dughmi. Representatives of political parties, human rights groups and trade unions were also present.

While most speakers went out of their way to emphasise that they were not interfering with the affairs of or questioning the integrity of the State Security Court or the judicial process in Jordan, there were questions over the authority of the State Security Court to hear the case and its handling of the proceedings of the trial.

Mr. Dughmi, who, along with Mr. Zoubi, was a member of the Shbeilat defence team which also included several other deputies, noted that the State Security Court was set up by the prime minister and as such the head of the government had to endorse every verdict passed by the court before it becomes effective.

While suggesting that the prime minister could use this prerogative if the court finds the deputies guilty, Mr. Dughmi indicated that the group he represented would not be satisfied with such a course of events.

It also appeared that the concern of the organisers of the "free-the-deputies" campaign was mainly focused on Mr. Shbeilat, one of the most popular members of the Lower House. He was elected from one of the most affluent constituencies, the Third District of Amman, in November 1989 elections with the highest number of votes in all the constituencies of the capital.

It was announced during Saturday's public meeting that the authorities had granted permission to a team from the Jordan Medical Association (JMA) to visit Mr. Shbeilat and Sheikh Qarrah to check up on their health conditions after they have spent over a week of hunger strike in detention.

JMA president Issaq Maraga told that the permission was granted earlier Saturday.

Top Vatican aide meets Hussein

(Continued from page 1)

But he said full diplomatic relations could take one or two years to forge.

"It seems the Vatican wants a gradual approach," he said. "We are on a voyage that clearly leads to the realm of full relations," he added.

A Vatican statement said the

Pope told Mr. Peres of his "burning desire to one day be able to be a pilgrim in that region (the Middle East) and above all the Holy Land and Jerusalem."

The Israeli foreign minister did not mention a date for the Pope's visit but later indicated it could be soon.

Hamass

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinians of collaborating with the Israeli occupation authorities. Palestinian sources said activists had beaten Issa twice in the past. Issa's brother-in-law was cited as a suspected collaborator

several months ago, they said. Since the outbreak of the intifada nearly five years ago, 537 Palestinians have been killed by fellow Arabs, most on suspicion of collaboration.

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Sears suffers first loss since Great Depression

CHICAGO (R) — Sears, Roebuck Co., the world's third largest retailer, reported its first loss in nearly 60 years Thursday. Sears said it lost \$633.7 million, or \$2.25 a share in the third quarter after a huge rise in insurance claims from hurricanes Andrew and Iniki, compared with a profit of \$229.2 million, or 67 cents a share, a year earlier. Revenues edged higher to \$14.49 billion from \$14.3 billion. Sears has not recorded a loss since the depth of the Great Depression in 1933, when it was \$2.5 million in the red for the year. Sears took a \$11.25 billion after-tax charge to cover insurance claims at its Allstate insurance subsidiary from last month's hurricane Andrew which slammed into Florida and Louisiana, and Iniki which hit Hawaii. Altogether Allstate lost \$840.2 million for the quarter, compared with a \$158.2 million profit a year earlier. Sears' core merchandising operations, which the company has been struggling to rejuvenate and make more competitive with Walmart and Kmart, the world's first and second largest retailers respectively, lost \$36.4 million for the third quarter after a \$54.4 million profit in the year-ago period.

Advertising business is no longer a 'lahta'

The following is the third and last section on advertising in Jordan. The subject is much too wide to be covered completely, but since advertising is undoubtedly becoming a more specialized field in Jordan, and undeniably an interesting economic indicator to measure the general business activities in any country, the Jordan Times has presented a few aspects of this business in the Kingdom. The previous parts were published Sunday Oct. 18, 1992, and Oct. 11, 1992.

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — There are over 1,000 licences the Ministry of Information issued for opening advertising agencies and the number is still growing. Abdul Halim Ataybi, the manager of the Unified Advertising Office (UAO), told the Jordan Times. Mr. Ataybi said that out of the 1,000 office licences only 180 advertising agencies are active and about 20 of them dominate the whole market.

He pointed out that UAO was the office through which the majority of newspaper ads pass, noting that it was set up in December 1974 by the daily newspapers to regulate ad requests from advertisers, prevent price undercutting and function as a

payment collection bureau. As such, Mr. Ataybi said, UAO classifies the advertising agencies into three categories: — Three or four agencies whose monthly bill exceeds JD20,000.

— About 15 agencies whose monthly bill ranges between JD 8,000-JD 13,000 and — The rest, which have their monthly bill averaging about JD 1,500 each.

Mr. Ataybi described the UAO as the rock on which the dreams of hopeful newcomers to the advertising industry crash.

"They (investors) come to me with their licences from the Ministry of Information and inquire what other requirements are needed. When I ask them for a JD 10,000 bank guarantee and mention what technical qualifications they should have, they leave and never show up again," he said.

The UAO chief warned that an advertising office, if thought to be a good source of income, could prove to be a disappointment. However, he said there were exceptions and mentioned the agency run by S.B.

"His expenditures are low, his presence and activity in the market are high and his follow-up on collecting his dues is remark-

able," Mr. Arabiyat said. Mr. S.B. who has been an advertising agent for over 25 years, said truthfulness, honesty and timeliness were paramount qualities to the personality of a successful advertising agent.

"The money an agent collects belongs to the newspapers and the only acts as a custodian on the funds for a commission return," he stressed.

He did not mention how many ad agents he would consider successful, but said that many persons expect to find advertising business a "lahta" (bonanza) but end up digging in their own pockets to cover obligations and expenses.

Interviewed, Mr. S.B. acknowledged that advertisers were becoming more demanding for design and artistic ads and that it had become a necessity for many agencies to employ technical staff to provide clients with better and advanced services.

He attributed the unprecedented boom in newspaper advertising to the following three factors:

— The congratulatory wishes to His Majesty King Hussein on his recovery, among many other Royal and national occasions since the beginning of this year.

— The low charges for ads.

— The rush to promote new businesses by Gulf returnees.

Asked why Al Rai was leading in terms of the volume of ads, Mr. S.B. highlighted the wide coverage and high sales of the newspaper in addition to the popularity of its column writers.

The general manager of another advertising company said the competition between agencies was so strong, especially in price undercutting and discount offers, that it was becoming very difficult to all agencies, and even those engaged in artistic designing, to maintain high advertising standards.

"It is not a healthy competition. It is very damaging," the general manager, whose first name is Ahmad, said.

Ahmad said things were not bad to the extent of closing down the company, which was set up only eight months ago, as "we have already secured a good business relation with 50 clients who are very keen on quality and extremely appreciative of artful design."

Ahmad, a Lebanese national, who did not wish to be identified any further, said he had witnessed a high degree of ingenuity among Jordanians and, as such, he was optimistic to attract more customers despite the throat-cutting competitiveness.

He pointed out that newspaper charges for ads were adequate and need not be increased.

H.J., the manager of yet another advertising agency, said advertising was a science and an art of language and design and all those who want to enter this line of business should pass an exam of qualification.

He noted that advertising for some agencies was just a matter of forwarding an ad from a client to a newspaper while for others it has taken the form of a salesperson carrying a Samsonite and knocking on doors to obtain ads.

"Such people are ruining themselves and others," he stressed.

He emphasized that advertising requires follow-up for feedback from clients. Many ad offices, Mr. H.J. added, do not even bother to check if their clients' ads get published the next day.

Mr. H.J. was bitter against newspapers for their unorganized distribution of ads and hoped newspapers would classify ads more properly and in a manner that would facilitate the location of an ad for the reader.

"A reader knows where to look for obituaries because newspapers have been placing them on specified pages for a long time, but ads for rent, sale, employment, public notices, car sales and a dozen other subjects do not have special, fixed sections and, as such, badly need to be organized," he said.

Asked whether he had passed

these comments to the responsible people at the newspapers he replied:

"They do not have time to listen. You, of course must know what kind of busting goes on every night."

On the other side of the fence, the public seems not to be concerned about the technical side but rather about the general content of a newspaper.

"I usually read the news on the first page because they are the most important and then I enjoy reading the ads," Taghreed Kiwan, a government employee told the Jordan Times.

She said that while attending university she concentrated on sports pages, but now she is interested in reading ads as her needs and requirements, as a housewife, have changed.

Mrs. Kiwan perceived congratulatory ads and obituary notices as "another form of business deals, a term to describe hypocrisy in a modern, mild language."

Other comments showed no disappointment with the huge volume of ads which cover most pages of daily newspapers. Most people viewed it as increased business activity, necessary social customs, traditional way of expression and a path to monitor latest products or grab a good opportunity or a bargain.

Financial Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE	NEW YORK CLOSE
	Date: 22/10/92	Date: 23/10/92
Sterling Pound	1.6250	1.6225
Deutsche Mark	1.5082	1.5280
Swiss Franc	1.3465	1.3634
French Franc	5.1175	5.1800
Japanese Yen	120.75	121.65
European Currency Unit	1.2880	1.2840

* USD Per STG
* London Opening @ 8.00 a.m. GMT
Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.12	3.53	3.53	3.75
Sterling Pound	8.75	7.62	7.07	6.62
Deutsche Mark	8.75	8.65	8.22	7.68
Swiss Franc	5.81	6.06	5.93	5.75
French Franc	9.87	9.75	9.31	8.88
Japanese Yen	3.93	3.75	3.65	3.62
European Currency Unit	10.00	9.93	9.37	8.93

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.
Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	343.65	6.55	Silver	3.79	.080

* 31 Karat
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.683	0.685
Sterling Pound	1.1074	1.1129
Deutsche Mark	0.4462	0.4484
Swiss Franc	0.4996	0.5021
French Franc	0.1317	0.1323
Japanese Yen	0.5611	0.5639
Dutch Guilder	0.3967	0.3987
Swedish Krona	0.1134	0.1190
Italian Lira	0.0508	0.0511
Belgian Franc	0.02170	0.02181

* Per 100
Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7900	1.8100
Lebanese Lira	0.03035	0.03265
Saudi Riyal	0.1818	0.1828
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2300	2.3050
Qatari Riyal	0.1850	0.1865
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7520	1.7750
UAE Dirham	0.1850	0.1865
Greek Drachma	0.3487	0.3525
Cypriot Pound	1.5160	1.5245

* Per 100
CAR Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	19/10/92	Close	21/10/92	Close
All-Share	151.80		154.00	
Banking Sector	115.10		117.12	
Insurance Sector	164.57		167.98	
Industry Sector	197.77		200.74	
Services Sector	219.27		222.35	

December 31, 1990 = 100

ANJIAN FINANCIAL MARKET

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN ISLAND BANK	30,834	3.500	3.150	3.700
JORDAN BANK	44,682	2.100	2.100	2.100
THE JORDAN BANK	11,380	3.200	3.200	3.200
JORDANIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	27,142	2.500	2.470	2.480
JORDAN BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT	10,478	2.000	2.000	2.070
ANAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	9,014	3.000	3.000	2.980
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	61,005	3.880	3.980	3.880
ANAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	610,682	1.470	1.480	1.450
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	122,287	1.930	1.930	1.900
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	40,989	3.890	3.870	3.880
WESTERN BANK	38,683	3.250	3.250	3.250
NETT BANK, SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	78,681	3.600	3.600	3.600
BANK OF JORDAN	21,847	17.800	17.850	17.900
ANAN BANK	19,235	120.500	120.500	120.500
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	6,787	2.900	2.900	2.890
JORDANIAN INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	1,430	2.750	2.820	2.820
JORDANIAN SEAS INSURANCE	2,684	2.070	2.070	2.070
JORDAN LIFT & MACHINERY INSURANCE	888	2.750	2.750	2.750
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	30,772	1.350	1.350	1.370
ANAN INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	10,335	6.340	6.350	6.300
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10,228	1.240	1.200	1.230
VERTICALS-CHARTER FERTILIZATION	7,805	5.000	5.100	5.000
UNITED KIDDER SHAW & COMPANY HOTELS	300,846	4.120	2.100	2.170
JORDANIAN HOTELS CORPORATION	12,713	1.240	1.120	1.130
MACHINERY, EQUIP., REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	15,312	1.250	1.250	1.250
PEIRA ENTERPRISES & INVESTMENTS LEASING	15,312	1.250	1.250	1.250
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	230,954	0.750	0.830	0.830
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	374	0.730	0.830	0.830
JORDAN KUMLEY CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	3,480	1.370	1.160	1.160
ANAN PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2,828	1.420	1.410	1.410
JORDAN BANK	6,026	2.540	2.540	2.540
ANAN ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	427,009	6.820	6.800	6.780
ANAN PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	50,097	6.770	6.770	6.780
THE INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	172,886	5.750	5.800	5.730
ANAN CHEMICAL INTERMEDIATE INDUSTRIES	13,775	21.450	21.500	21.350
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	39,069	5.910	5.980	5.930
DAR AL DUA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	25,083	8.000	8.920	8.710
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	6,426	1.180	1.150	1.150
THE JORDAN WOODS MILLS	13,097	10.900	10.940	10.910
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	84,216	5.040	6.040	6.000
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	7,625	0.730	0.730	0.740
JORDAN PAPER & CARD BOARD FACTORIES	48,500	4.850	4.850	4.850
JORDAN PAPER INDUSTRIES	1,000	3.900	4.000	4.000
JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	6,024	2.690	2.880	2.880
JORDAN TOWERS	1,563	5.000	5.250	5.200
ANAN CERAMIC FOR PLUMB. & CERAMICALS	54,260	2.240	2.240	2.240
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	124,651	0.680	0.910	0.920
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	19,493	4.440	4.840	4.920
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	26,300	13.400	13.500	13.400
ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	3,728	3.650	3.650	3.650
WOLAN INDUSTRIES	27,997	2.270	2.250	2.200
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHINERY	245	1.180	1.150	1.150
SPINNING & WEAVING	4,794	2.990	2.990	2.990
ATTACHMENT CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	105	1.000	1.050	1.050
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JWC	3,518	2.700	2.760	2.760
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	103,394	6.370	6.300	6.200
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	104,018	3.990	4.000	4.020
THE JORDAN CRISTAL FRAGANCES	164,275	1.370	1.370	1.390
JORDAN NOODLES INDUSTRIES	12,914	1.890	1.920	1.950
JORDAN PULP & PAPER INDUSTRIES	5,639	0.430	0.410	0.420
UNIVERSAL NOODLES INDUSTRIES	136,825	5.000	5.000	5.000
ANAN INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	773,381	2.790	2.780	2.810
JORDAN TORACIC & CIGARETTES	2,250	22.500	22.500	22.500
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	9,440	8.370	8.380	8.370

GRAND TOTAL 4,535,160
NO. OF TRADING SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET 1 32050
TRADING VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET 1 JD 32056

Singapore official sees problem in aspirations, not high cost of living

SINGAPORE (AP) — People in prosperous Singapore should not complain about rising costs and have only themselves to blame for expecting ever-better lifestyles, a senior official said.

"When actual standards of living rise, but not quickly enough to satisfy rising expectations, hopes are disappointed," said Deputy Prime Minister Lee Loong.

Economic growth slowed in the first half of this year to five per cent from 7.4 per cent in the first half of 1991. Consumers and businessmen are in a cautious mood, retail sales are sluggish and the stock market is depressed.

"People feel that things are not getting better and blame this on 'rising costs,' when in fact things are getting better and costs have not gone up that much," Mr. Lee said.

Rising prices had become a cause of growing anxiety in the last two years, he said, when the 3.4 per cent inflation rate of recent years was actually lower than in the 1970s and 1980s. This year it should be 2.5 per cent, he said.

Three high visibility price hikes — bus fares, telephone charges and parking fees — affected many people, he said, and they may have been imposed too abruptly.

"There is no basis for thinking that our standard of living is declining, or even stagnating,"

Mr. Lee said. The cost of medical care increases each year and people feared that they would not be able to pay their medical bills, he said.

"So although their impact on the cost of living is not high, the unhappiness is out of proportion to the amount of money involved," Mr. Lee pointed out. Most Singaporeans will never own a house because of the island's small size. Instead, they have to content with trading up to bigger and better apartments.

"So when people say living costs have gone up, it does not mean that they can no longer afford their old lifestyles. It means that they have shifted to a new lifestyle, which costs more than their old one," Mr. Lee said.

Not only is growth slowing, there appears to be a growing awareness that it may be slowing permanently to a pace more in keeping with a nearly developed economy.

The growth rate last achieved double digits in 1988, when the economy expanded by 11.1 per cent.

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong told a national day rally in August that "the days of double-digit growth are over. Singapore's economy is maturing."

He said the economy was likely to grow by about four to six per cent a year in the next few years, but warned that even that modest expansion wasn't assured.

Angolan exports rise 23%

LUANDA (R) — Angola's exports of oil, diamonds and coffee, its main foreign exchange earners, rose 23.4 per cent in the first half of 1992 compared with the same period last year, the National Statistics Institute (INE) said Friday. Angola's \$1.8 billion revenue from these three products represented 95.4 per cent of its total exports during the six-month period, INE said. Oil accounted for 89.8 per cent, diamonds 5.5 per cent and coffee 0.1 per cent of exports, it added. Oil exports rose 18.2 per cent by value from first half 1991 to \$1.67 billion and 16.3 per cent by volume to 93 million barrels.

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Tajik rebels enter Dushanbe; seize key government buildings

MOSCOW (AP) — Dozens of armed rebels entered the Tajik capital of Dushanbe early Saturday, seized key government buildings and pledged to restore ousted President Rakhmon Nabiyev to power, news agencies reported.

Another 1,000 to 2,000 pro-Nabiyev supporters gathered 30 kilometres outside the capital of the impoverished Central Asian nation, Interfax reported. Tajikistan has been wracked by civil strife since spring.

Mr. Nabiyev, an old-style Communist leader, was forced to resign in September under pressure from pro-democracy and Islamic groups. Fighting rooted in tribal and territorial disputes continued in southern regions bordering Afghanistan.

"We have come here to stop bloodshed and to restore legality, trampled by Islamic fundamentalists," former parliamentary

speaker Safarali Kendzhayev, a rebel leader, told ITAR-TASS.

The attempted coup started only hours after Acting President Akbarshah Iskandarov declared a state of emergency to control "the complicated political situation" in Tajikistan and imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on Dushanbe.

Details of the takeover were sketchy, but gunfire was reported in central Dushanbe throughout the morning, and there were an unknown number of casualties, Interfax and ITAR-TASS reported.

Stores were closed and public transportation was not working, and the airport was closed to domestic flights, said local journalist Salokhiddin Ergashev.

Mr. Ergashev said dozens of pro-Nabiyev supporters and rebels from the southern Kulyab region entered Dushanbe about 6 a.m. (0100 GMT) and within

three hours had captured the legislature, presidential palace, cabinet office, offices of Tajikistan's spiritual leader and the national broadcasting centre.

Interfax said the rebels met "practically no resistance" from security forces. The acting president had requested Russian troops based in Tajikistan to guard key buildings, but it was unclear whether they or Tajik Interior Ministry troops were on duty Saturday morning.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev appealed to his soldiers to remain neutral, Interfax said.

Rebel leaders Mr. Kendzhayev and Rustam Abdurakhimov went on television to urge people to remain calm.

Mr. Kendzhayev and Mr. Abdurakhimov also pledged to restore the government Mr. Nabiyev headed until May when

he agreed to form a coalition with his opponents. Mr. Kendzhayev lost his job in the reorganisation.

The two rebel leaders also called on ethnic Russians not to leave Tajikistan. Anti-Russian feeling is strong in the country of 5.1 million people, which is more than 80 per cent ethnic Tajik or Uzbek, but Russians hold many of the professional jobs needed to keep the economy and government functioning.

Mr. Nabiyev's whereabouts were unknown Saturday, but Interfax reported that Mr. Iskandarov, the acting president, was in Dushanbe trying to convene a meeting of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet legislature.

Mr. Nabiyev was the third president of a former Soviet republic to be toppled since the collapse of the Soviet Communist regime last year. The presidents of Azerbaijan and Georgia also have been forced out.

Strong earthquake strikes Georgia

MOSCOW (AP) — A strong earthquake struck the former Soviet Republic of Georgia Saturday, killing one person and destroying dozens of homes in the sparsely populated Caucasus Mountains.

The quake also was felt in southern Russia and in Armenia, where one of the worst earthquakes in history killed 25,000 people in 1988.

Saturday's earthquake registered 6.7 on the Richter Scale, according to the U.S. Geological Survey and Swedish seismologists. The epicentre was near the town of Barisakho, 90 kilometres northeast of the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, Georgian officials said.

A 15-year-old boy was killed by the quake in Barisakho, said Georgian Interior Ministry spokesman Valiko Gogolashvili. Many other people in the town were injured and several dozen homes were destroyed, he said.

No other casualties or serious damage was reported, but communications with Barisakho and the surrounding area was cut by the quake.

The Caucasus Mountains, which form part of the traditional border between Europe and Asia, are frequently struck by strong earthquakes which can unleash devastating landslides on mountain villages. The area is sparsely populated, however, which keeps damage and casualties low.

Saturday's quake struck about 2:20 a.m. (2320 GMT Friday), awakening people in Tbilisi. Residents ran into the streets followed by about 12 minutes of steady tremors, said journalist Viktor Voronuk.

"When my wife woke me up, I even thought somebody was trying to force his way into the door," said Mr. Voronuk. "We wanted to run away. The dogs were howling."

Mr. Kobaidze, the government spokesman, said there were fears that a 40-metre high dam at the Zhinval Reservoir 20 kilometres north of Tbilisi would be damaged by the quake and cause flooding in Tbilisi.

Inspectors found the dam undamaged, he said.

Tremors were also felt in southern Russia, the Armenian capital of Yerevan and in northern Armenia, the ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

Residents of the northern Armenian region of Noyemberyan did not know whether to leave their homes because of the earthquake or to stay inside and hide from shelling from the neighbouring Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, said local government leader Vasil Chilingaryan.

The epicentre of the quake was about 120 kilometres east of the last severe earthquake to strike Georgia, on April 28, 1991. At least 81 people were killed as landslides buried mountain villages following the 7.0 magnitude quake.

Saturday's earthquake also was within 320 kilometres of the 1988 Armenian earthquake that measured 6.8 on the Richter scale. Besides killing 25,000 people, that quake levelled hundreds of prefabricated buildings in several large cities and towns, leaving 500,000 people homeless.

Vietnam urges U.S. to normalise relations

HANOI (R) — The Vietnamese government urged the United States Saturday to normalise diplomatic relations and stop linking normalisation to a resolution of the fate of American servicemen missing from the Vietnam War.

But Hanoi's Foreign Ministry said Vietnam had been and was now doing its best to cooperate with Washington to find clues to or remains of Americans who never made it home from the war dead or alive.

"Normalisation between Vietnam and the United States is in the interest of both countries, and for peace, stability and development in the region, and normalisation should not be linked to any preconditions," the ministry said.

"Vietnam always considers the MIA (missing-in-action) question as a humanitarian one not linked to any political question. We have been and are in the process of doing our best to cooperate with the United States to resolve this question," it said.

The ministry had been asked to respond to remarks by President George Bush, his special envoy retired Gen. John Vessey and other U.S. officials saying significant progress had been made on the MIA question.

Mr. Bush Friday hailed Hanoi's agreement to provide thousands of photographs and other documents from its previously closed war prisoner ar-

hives. "Today, finally, I am convinced we can begin writing the last chapter of the Vietnam War," Mr. Bush said. "I want to stress it is only a beginning but it is a significant beginning."

"It was a bitter conflict but Hanoi knows today that we seek only answers without the threat of retribution."

He made no mention of specific steps toward normalising U.S.-Vietnamese relations but said he would consider such measures as part of a step-by-step process begun last year.

Washington has made resolution of the MIA question, the success of a United Nations peace plan in Cambodia and other issues preconditions for normalisation with Hanoi and a lifting of a U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam.

Vietnam agreed during a visit by Gen. Vessey last week to give the U.S. new access to wartime documents and photographs that might answer questions about servicemen listed in Washington as presumed dead, but whose bodies were never recovered.

The Pentagon said the first material included 4,800 photos. Some 1,100 were unfamiliar to U.S. intelligence.

"The importance is not in the material we brought back. The important thing is the material that we expect to get in the days ahead," Gen. Vessey said.

Heavy fighting breaks out near Monrovia Port

MONROVIA (R) — Heavy fighting exploded Saturday near the headquarters of West African troops defending Liberia's capital against Charles Taylor's rebels.

A storm of small arms fire and mortars could be heard from the direction of the ECOMOG base just north of the port in the northern suburbs of Monrovia. ECOMOG troops turned reporters back before they could reach the base.

Soldiers from the six-nation force, originally sent to separate Liberia's warring factions, but now embroiled in the war itself, said Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) attacked during the night.

"The NPFL have advanced again," said one refugee among hundreds streaming into the city centre carrying bundles of belongings on their heads.

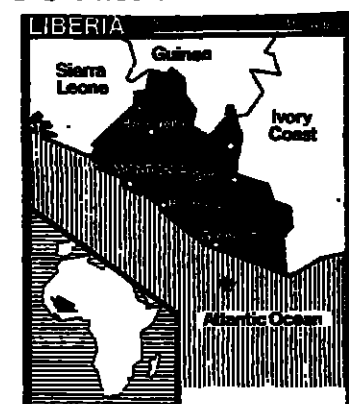
United Nations workers say that more than 100,000 people have fled into Monrovia since the NPFL attacked the city on Oct. 15 in its boldest offensive for more than two years.

Residents said electricity was cut at about 3 a.m. (0300 GMT) Saturday, suggesting Mr. Taylor had captured the city's power station near the port area.

Main water supplies to the besieged capital have been cut since last weekend when the NPFL captured the U.N.-maintained water plant at White Plains.

Mr. Taylor also appeared to have regained control of the strategic Caldwell Military Base on the northern fringes of Monrovia which fell to ECOMOG and the anti-Taylor ULIMO militia Thursday.

ECOMOG has denied Mr. Taylor's accusation that it backs ULIMO, but it is now clearly cooperating with members of both the Sierra Leone-based mili-



Map of Liberia showing the location of Monrovia and the surrounding regions.

ty and the ramp Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) who fought for the late President Samuel Doe.

Amongst military reinforcements rushing towards the ECOMOG base from the city centre, reporters saw a van packed with armed ULIMO or AFL militiamen.

Both militias, whose uniforms are barely distinguishable, are roaring around Monrovia, as though they own the place, raising residents' fears of intimidation and looting.

A reporter overheard an ECOMOG officer dressing down an ULIMO fighter. It appeared that ULIMO lost Caldwell because they were concentrating on looting instead of guarding the base, allowing NPFL to infiltrate back into the compound.

"We capture the base for you and you go and lose it," the furious ECOMOG officer barked.

Small-arms fire was audible Saturday morning around Logan Town, a residential district close to the city centre. Many civilians fled the area.

Swede Relief Hospital said it had received eight civilians in the morning with stray bullet wounds.

Fight for Sarajevo continues despite talks

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnia's rival groups stepped up their fight for key districts of Sarajevo early Saturday, just hours after U.N. peacekeepers managed to get their military commanders to sit down together for talks.

Machinegun and mortar fire rattled through the city's western suburbs overnight as Serb forces appeared to be trying to link up with units in the north of the city. Sarajevo Radio said Serbs bombarded the suburb of Dobrinja at dawn Saturday. But fighting appeared to have slackened again by mid-morning.

U.N. officials hailed Friday's five-hour meeting — the first face-to-face encounter between Muslim, Serb and Croat commanders — as a breakthrough in the search for peace in the former Yugoslav republic.

"For the first time we have spoken together not through weapons but around the table — it's positive," said U.N. peace force commander, General Philippe Morillon.

But there were few tangible signs of any end to the bitter fighting which has ravaged the

former Yugoslav republic for more than six months, or to the misery of thousands of people trapped or held prisoner by both sides.

In New York, the U.N. said it would send 7,000 more troops to Bosnia by mid-November and appointed a five-man panel to investigate war crimes in Yugoslavia.

But international efforts to secure the release of prisoners suffered a double blow Friday.

A release of the first 5,000, brokered by the Red Cross, had to be postponed Friday because not enough West European countries had offered temporary asylum.

Then Radovan Karadzic, leader of the Bosnian Serbs, announced he would no longer release Croat and Muslim prisoners because the gesture was not being reciprocated.

Gun and mortar battles continued unabated in Sarajevo and other key towns — some of it between Muslims and Croats who are supposed to be allies against the Serbs.

In Sarajevo, heavy machinegun and mortar fire echoed through the western suburbs in the early evening.

Tracer bullets and blast flashes lit the night sky in a renewed attack on Sarajevo, a Croatian-held suburb which straddles major western roads to the city. The riverside suburb of Hrasno was also under fire.

Sporadic anti-aircraft cannon fire pounded Sarajevo's old town and machinegun fire rattled out across the city centre.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported that Bosnian Serb forces had reached the key northern town of Gradacac after several days of fierce fighting and were battling remaining Muslim forces in the town.

Sarajevo Radio confirmed that fighting was continuing in Gradacac. It said at least one shell had landed near a freight train used as a barricade by Muslim defenders who say it contains poisonous chlorine gas.

It added that seven bodies of Muslim civilians were found Saturday around Gradacac.

There was no independent confirmation of either report.

Sarajevo Radio said Bosnian forces commander Sefer Halilovic had to issue a second order for an end to fighting between Muslims and Croats around Novi Travnik, some 100 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo.

Commander Halilovic's appeal was a further indication of growing command and control problems within the Bosnian army and the fragility of the alliance with Croat forces.

The fighting in Novi Travnik and nearby Vitez, both of which straddle the route for overland convoys organised by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, has blocked relief supplies to Sarajevo.

Further tension between Muslims and Croats was reported at Jablanica, a majority Muslim town near Mostar.

Visnews journalists near Jablanica said Muslims had blocked off the main road into the town with some 40 vehicles. There were also unconfirmed reports that Muslim gunmen in the town were holding Croat hostages.

Patten challenges China to make its own proposals

LONDON (R) — Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten challenged China Saturday to come up with its own proposals for introducing greater democracy to the British colony.

Mr. Patten said he believed his plans, flatly rejected by China which takes over the colony from Britain in 1997, were "moderate and restrained."

"If the Chinese have alternative proposals which they want to put forward they should say what they are. They can't go on saying 'no' without putting their alternative forward," Mr. Patten told BBC Radio in London in an interview.

Britain has a 99-year lease from China on Hong Kong expiring in 1997. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher signed an agreement in December 1984 under which Hong Kong reverts to China in 1997 and Peking promises to maintain the territory's social and economic systems.

Mr. Patten was speaking after his first visit to Peking as governor, during which the Chinese leadership rejected his plans for electoral reform and snubbed him on every possible occasion.

China's top official responsible for Hong Kong, Lu Ping, threatened all-out confrontation and hinted that Peking might force Hong Kong's legislature, cabinet and judiciary in 1997.

Under Mr. Patten's proposals, Hong Kong people would be able to elect, directly or indirectly, the majority of their legislature for the first time.

"I think that they do represent a way forward which should and could survive through 1997 and beyond," Mr. Patten said in the BBC interview.

"I also believe that because my proposals are rooted in public opinion and because they will, in my judgement, work, nobody would want or should want to change them in 1996 or 1997."

Clinton warns against complacency; Bush plugs global record

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin (AP) — Bill Clinton's campaign is working to keep supporters from being lulled by his wide lead in the public opinion polls, while President George Bush is trying to lure back his 1988 supporters by stressing his global credentials.

For Ross Perot, the campaign battleground is still television, but he's about to get a taste of life on the road.

Mr. Clinton was beginning Saturday with a rally in blue-collar Green Bay, Wisconsin, and then flying off to Iowa to help the AFL-CIO trade federation with a televised get-out-the-vote programme. The next-to-last weekend of the campaign also had Ohio and Michigan stops for the Arkansas governor.

Although his lead remains strong in public opinion surveys, Mr. Clinton said he was not taking anything for granted.

"Do what you can for Bill Clinton and Al Gore," he told supporters at a rally in Springfield, Mo., Friday night. Meanwhile, his campaign dispatched about 60 junior staffers from its Little Rock, Arkansas, headquarters to help with voter turnout efforts in key states.

Mr. Bush Friday used the powers of his office to political advantage with a pair of foreign policy announcements.

At the White House, he announced a breakthrough with Hanoi on contentious questions regarding information on Viet-

nam War prisoners of war and missing servicemen. In Florida, he signed legislation which tightens the economic embargo on Cuba — very popular with the large Cuban exile population in the Miami area.

"Our policies and principles rest on a single belief: For freedom to rise in Cuba, Fidel Castro must fall," Mr. Bush said at the ceremony. The Bush campaign refused to let the bill's Democratic sponsors take part.

Mr. Clinton said of the measure: "I believe in it and I will enforce it."

Besides Florida, Mr. Bush campaigned in Kentucky and Alabama, and planned Saturday to visit Texas and Louisiana.

Mr. Perot, who has been campaigning almost exclusively on television, planned rallies Sunday in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He also bought an hour for a commercial preceding ABC Television's highly rated Monday Night Football.

The intensity of the campaign did not seem to be changing a lot of votes.

Polls continued to show Mr. Clinton with a considerable lead over Mr. Bush and Mr. Perot still trailing but gaining.

A survey of voters in all states by ABC found Mr. Clinton "clearly ahead" in 18 states with 261 electoral votes — just 9 votes shy of the 270 needed to win the presidency. By contrast, Mr. Bush was not "clearly ahead" in

any and had a statistically significant lead in just three states with only 18 electoral college votes. Mr. Perot was ahead nowhere, but separate polls by U.S. News and World Report and the Washington Post showed him with 20 per cent support, the highest since his formal announcement Oct. 1.

Besides the announcements on Vietnam and Cuba, the president issued an executive order signed to make more federal contracts available to non-union labour. Unions are solidly against the president.

Meanwhile, Vice President Dan Quayle went to Pennsylvania to announce a \$1.4 billion federal contract for the V-22 aircraft, which takes off like a helicopter and flies like a plane. It was the latest in a series of White House moves to take credit for programmes it has opposed in the past.

Clinton running mate Sen. Gore scheduled stops Saturday in Kentucky and North Carolina.

At a rally Friday night in Columbia, South Carolina, the Tennessee senator preached racial harmony, saying the nation could learn lessons from his and Mr. Clinton's native south.

"We are one nation under God and we are one people with one future and we're going to be together," Sen. Gore told about 4,000 people on the campus of the University of South Carolina. Mr. Clinton also has called for

an end to racial divisions. But the Democrats have been accused of tailoring their campaign message to so-called Reagan Democrats — relatively conservative white middle-class voters who abandoned the Democratic Party in the 1980s — and ignoring black voters.

Mr. Gore's visit preceded by hours Mr. Bush's trip to Florida, a traditional Republican stronghold with 25 electoral votes that is now a tossup.

Mr. Clinton's name wasn't quite dead this week, but it was dirt.

Texas farmers upset with the Democratic candidate's agricultural policies plowed Mr. Clinton's name in 750-foot (230-metre) letters into a Nueces County field Friday, then cut a slash mark through it.

"We might not have much money or power or influence, but we sure know how to write big," said Jimmy Dodson, who grows cotton and grain.

"We're here to make our mark. We're here to make some trails and we're here to plow Bill Clinton," Mr. Dodson told a rally of about 150 farmers and members of Corpus Christi agribusinesses.

Several farmers said they were afraid Mr. Clinton would cut subsidies to mid-level producers and force them to provide expensive health insurance for their employees. "Big government is my prob-

lem right now and he's only going to make it bigger," James Adams said.

Meanwhile, a top Japanese trade official Friday welcomed Mr. Clinton's advocacy of free trade, but expressed concern about the Democratic presidential candidate's stance on international business dealings.

Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) Vice Minister Noboru Hatakeyama told reporters Japan is "neutral" on the U.S. presidential race and commended Mr. Clinton for speaking out in favour of free trade.

But Mr. Hatakeyama added that all foreign countries should be concerned about Mr. Clinton's desire to possibly increase taxes on foreign companies and said that "super 301" trade legislation thought to be favoured by Mr. Clinton is anti-free trade.

Under the super 301 clause, tariffs of up to 100 per cent could be imposed on exports of a country that refuses to open its markets.

Japanese business leaders have been worried that a Democratic White House might not cling to the principles of free trade as strongly as Republican presidents have.

The Japanese trade official reiterated Japan's opposition to trade groups such as the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and said Japan should not join a similar grouping of Asian nations.

COLUMN 10000

Surgeon leaves forceps in man's stomach

WARSAW (R) — A man has won damages of \$12,000 from a Polish hospital after a surgeon left a pair of forceps in his stomach during an operation, Polish news agency (PAP) said. The man, who was not named, had to have part of his stomach removed in a separate operation because of the damage caused by the 20 cm long (six inch) instrument, PAP said.

Elizabeth Taylor to get award

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The American Film Institute (AFI) says Elizabeth Taylor will be the 21st recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. The Academy Award-winning actress will receive the honour on March 11. "As the 21st recipient of this prestigious award, Elizabeth Taylor joins a distinguished group of individuals who have made enormous contributions to America's film heritage," institute chairman Frederick Pierce said Friday. Past winners include Henry Fonda, Bette Davis, Orson Welles, Lillian Gish, Billy Wilder, Barbara Stanwyck, Gregory Peck and Kirk Douglas. Sidney Poitier took the prize this year.

Bush is a long shot in Mexico

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — George Bush is a long shot in Mexico, where bets can be placed on the U.S. presidential race. Sports books from Yucatan to Baja California offer wagers on the outcome, and their posted odds this week mirrored U.S. polls showing Democratic nominee Bill Clinton as the favourite in the Nov. 3 election. Mr. Clinton was listed at 1 to 20, meaning a victory by the Democrat would bring only 50 cents on a \$10 bet in terms of U.S. dollars. President Bush's odds were 8 to 1, on Tuesday but by the close of business Thursday had dropped to 15 to 1, which would fetch \$150 for the same \$10 bet if he were elected to a second term. Long-shot players placing that \$10 bet on independent candidate Ross Perot would reap a \$1,000 payoff if he won because his chances were pegged at 100 to 1.

Sting cries fraud over missing millions

LONDON (R) — Rock star Sting has called in the police fraud squad after discovering up to \$6 million (\$9.75 million) missing from his personal bank accounts, Scotland Yard said. Sting, whose real name is Gordon Sumner, made allegations of fraud several weeks ago, a Yard spokeswoman said. "We can confirm that the Metropolitan Police Fraud Squad are conducting an investigation," she added. The fraud was reported to involve misappropriation of royalties and other payments. Sting, 41, a former teacher, is said to have a \$20 million (\$32.5 million) fortune from his rock career, first with the group The Police and then as a solo singer and songwriter. He married long-time girlfriend Trudie Styler in August in a ceremony at which the bride wore a \$20,000 (\$32,480) dress designed by Italian-born Gianni Versace.

U.S. skydivers break record

MYRTLE BEACH, South Carolina (AP) — A group of 200 skydivers joined hands for three seconds to set a world record, after failing in 24 previous tries over several days. Judges watched videotapes taken by other skydivers from four different angles before determining Friday that the 25th attempt was successful. All 400 grips needed to be held for three seconds to be considered a record. More than 190 divers made the connections on several attempts Thursday, and 199 joined hands during Friday's first jump, with the final grip missing by about six inches. The skydivers jumped from six airplanes at about 18,000 feet (5,500 metres). They had about 60 seconds to link up before spreading out again to open their parachutes at about 2,000 feet (600 metres). The skydivers used a formation of five circles with four people connecting each circle. Twelve divers were in the centre circle, and 64 were in the outer circle. Each circle was a different colour. A group of 150 skydivers set the last record in Belgium on July 4.

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